

## Skinned Knees by adkinsmayo

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**Summary:**

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

## 1. Chapter 1

You shimmy your way into your small office cubical, and plop down onto your desk chair, trying hard not to spill the coffee in your hand. If you'd even call it coffee, seeing how much cream and sugar you've just stirred into the steaming liquid. You can picture perfectly in your mind exactly how Hopper would react to it. He'd peak into your cup, his brows would come together, his nose would crinkle, and then without looking away from your heinous excuse for a cup of coffee he'd say 'That's disgusting', while shaking his head and backing away as if he were a kid who had just laid eyes on some rotting carcass in the woods. You instinctually roll your eyes and set your cup down next to your hulking mass of a computer to continue to work.

You've been working as a temp at this small attorney's office in Hawkins for almost two years. It took you five years into law school to realize that it was time to come home because this was absolutely not what you wanted to be doing with your life. But you had no idea what it really was you did want to do. Every minute you spent trying to figure that out, you felt like your life was rushing by you. But as luck would have it, you were able to find a stable job using the knowledge you took away from school. It made you feel better knowing that your time, effort, and money wasn't completely going to waste. It was also pure luck you even had a home to go back to after you decided small town life just wasn't for you. Or at least you thought it wasn't. After receiving an oh-so-prestigious offer to get the fuck out of dodge, you filled out your student loan forms and ran as fast as you could, leaving what little family you had left, behind. That family being your older sister, Lorelai, and your brother-in-law, Tommy, which were so happy to take you in for "as long as you needed" which you knew was estranged, upper middle-class, sibling talk for "you're family so we feel obligated, but get the hell off of our couch as soon as possible" so you didn't plan on staying there long. But god, once you drove past that familiar "Welcome to Hawkins" sign outside of town, you couldn't help but let out a breath you've been holding in for five long years. But then on your way towards your sister's house, the anxiety kicked in. You couldn't stop thinking about how the hell you were going to come back from this.

‘Do I have to go back to school? I don’t even know what I want to do! I’m 28 now, so if I went back to school now I’d be 32 by the time I graduated. That’s not bad! But what if I need grad school to do what I want to do? How the hell am I going to pay for that? Fuck, I’m already in so much debt! I need a job. But what decently paying job wants a girl with half of a law degree? And what decently paying job am I even going to find in Hawkins? How am I supposed to-‘

“FUCK!”

You yelled as you’re ripped from your thoughts, now looking on to what had just happened. You turn off your car and rush out to meet the driver who’s tail you just hit. “Oh my god, I am so sorry, I-“ you start to say as you move towards the rather large man, but you stop when you take note at how red his face was stating to get. He violently turns his head towards you, making you jump a tad, and holds up a finger to get you to stop talking. He shoves his hand into his car window and dramatically pulls out his brick phone. “I’m not saying a single word to you until the police get here” he spits out in anger as he begins to dial. You sigh and slowly nod your head, not wanting to say anything that might set him off more, and start to move so you could lean on the side of your car to wait. Once you reach your car, you first open up the driver’s door and reach in to grab your box of cigarettes you so desperately needed. You gently close your door and turned your back to lean against your car as you began to light up a cigarette. You take a long drag in the hopes that the nicotine would soften the sting burning at the overzealous words the man was yelling into his phone. It was only about ten minutes before a police truck arrived with the word “Chief” printed on the sides. ‘Great.’ You thought as you pulled your cigarette from between your teeth. You nearly dropped it to extinguish it under your toe but you didn’t want to add a littering fine on top of the insane ticket you were prepared to get. So you quickly lifted your leg to extinguish the cherry on the bottom of your shoe and tossed it into your car to find and throw away later. The sun was starting to set so all you could barely see was a tall, broad-shouldered man wearing a wide-brimmed hat step out of the truck. You stand up straight and wait for whom you assumed was the sheriff, to ask you two what had happened. You wanted to get a hold on the story before your “victim” could so you could try to better your chances. Once the officer was close enough, you opened your mouth to speak but when you tried, your breath

hitched as the roughest, grizzliest, and no doubt the most handsome face you'd ever seen, came clearer into view. You close your mouth to shake your head to try and break this stupid-little-girl-crush-spell-thing his deep blue eyes and scraggly beard that covered his sharp jawline had just put on you. But once you opened your mouth to try and speak again, you were cut off by the ramblings of Mr. Big Red Giant. Having missed your chance, you quickly close your mouth once again and looked over to the sheriff as he simply stood there with a stern gaze and his arms crossed, allowing the other man to have his tantrum. You guessed this wasn't the first time the sheriff has had to deal with the loudest man alive so you just stood there with your hands at your sides, waiting to tell your side of the story. The red man, now visibly sweating, went on for a solid two minutes before taking a few rough steps forward, dramatically pointing his finger at you. That's when the sheriff finally moved; he uncrossed his arms and took a firm step between the two of you while raising his arms and opening up his hands to flash him his palms. "Now, now, Harry," he said calmly and quietly- well just loud enough for us to hear over big red's heavy breathing, "I know you're upset, but there's nothing I can do for you if you decide to place a hand on this young lady, so let's not do nothin' rash and calm dow-" the sheriff was swiftly cut off by Harry shoving his pointed finger right onto the sheriff's chest. You immediately tense up and waited to see what the sheriff would do. "Do NOT tell me to CALM down, Jim. I have a righ-" Harry was fortunately interrupted by Sheriff Jim throwing an open handcuff over Harry's outstretched wrist and pulling his arms together behind his back. "Now you did it Harry, you see if you woulda just calmed down I could've helped you out here but now the only right you got is the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will," You couldn't help but let out a small laugh but you weren't sure if you were in the clear just yet so you quickly placed a hand over your mouth to hopefully muffle your giggles as the sheriff took a poor handcuffed Harry towards the back of his truck as he continued to reciting the Miranda rights. Once Harry was secured in the backseat, Jim made his way back towards you, glancing at the damage done on the cars. You had only just noticed that there wasn't anything more than a few scratches and a small dent that was on your car. "Well, it seems you got lucky runnin' into the dumbest, most ill-tempered man in town miss-" He reached out his hand to shake yours and turned his ear towards you, waiting for your

response. You took the hand from your mouth and brought down it to shake his. "Y/LN, my name's Y/N Y/LN" You softly smiled at him and he did the same to you. "Glad to meet you, Miss Y/LN. The name's Chief Hopper." He moved his hand from yours to tip his hat at you. You couldn't help but let a quiet laugh fall from your lips at his small chivalrous, but sort of silly, action. "Please, call me Y/N." You figured you'd return some other kind of similar small politeness back at him. You rub your hands up and down your biceps as the temperature had dropped since you've been here; your sister is probably wondering where you are. "I'd say call me Jim, but you probably shouldn't when I'm on duty." You let the side of your mouth rise up a tad, as you couldn't keep yourself from flirting a little. "What about when you're off duty?" It was very subtle but you can tell he caught it, because he slightly smirked back as well. But as soon as he noticed you noticing his eyes fell and he let out a sharp cough. "Well, I uh- I should be getting ol' Harry here to the station to cool off for the night." He turned slightly to gesture towards his truck, accidentally letting you see the light pink tint that was brushed on his cheeks. You couldn't keep yourself from smiling but it was short lived. When he turned back towards you, he was met by a confused expression on your face. "You're not going to write me a ticket?" you asked, he let out a breathy laugh and crouched down to look closer at the damage done to the front of your car. "It seems you got the worst of it, and you had to deal with Mr. hot pants over there, so I think you've been punished enough for one night." You let out a quiet laugh at the place your thoughts took you from his phrasing. Ever since you really got a good look at him, your mind hasn't been able to venture far from that place. You could feel the hairs stand up on the back of your neck and you knew you couldn't blame the cold. He stood up and looked back at you after inspecting your car for the last time. You prayed to god that he wasn't a mind reader. He let out an awkward laugh and rubbed the back of his neck as he looked down at the ground. You paused for a second before breaking the seemingly never-ending silence. "Okay, well thanks I uh- should probably be going. My um- sister is probably wondering uh- where I - am." You say as you struggled to get into your car. All of your thoughts were jumbled together at once, shouting different solutions at how to try and make this interaction less awkward. But each time you yanked on your locked seatbelt you could feel the air getting thicker and thicker. You finally got your seat belt on after what felt

like hours, started your car, and quickly waved at the chief before you started to drive away. As you pulled off you yelled "Bye Ji- Chief. Bye Chief Hopper!" a little too enthusiastically. So much so that your eyes immediately clenched shut as you groaned at your actions. But you quickly opened your eyes back up, desperately not wanting to cause another accident where you'd have to endure another awfully awkward interaction with the chief. You continued to drive in the direction of your sister's house as your thoughts now focusing less on how chaotic your future was looking to wondering what had happened to the smooth teenager who could slide her tongue into any mouth she happened to be interested in that night. You played that scene over and over in your head, groaning louder and louder after every repeat. It wasn't until you pulled into your sister's driveway when a glimmer of hope had slipped through the cracks. "At least he'll be unlikely to forget you." A small smile started to grow on your lips but was quickly squashed when your sister came storming out of her home yelling "WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT TIME IT IS?"

## 2. Chapter 2

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

You're taken abruptly out of your fond memory by the blaring sound of the office phone ringing. You pause a moment to sort out your thoughts and cleared your throat before answering the phone. "Harrison and Grant Law, this is Y/N speaking, how may I direct your call?" You hear the caller shift in their seat and quickly clear their throat before replying. "Yeah, I was wondering if you could connect me to the sluttiest temp in the office?" Your eyes widened and you could immediately recognize Jim's familiar rough voice and silently scolded yourself for not checking the caller ID before using your annoying customer service voice on him. You knew Jim would be making fun of you for this later. You quickly drop the phone to hold against your chest as you stand up slightly to look over your cubicle walls to make sure no one was close enough to hear before you responded. You weren't so certain where this conversation would lead, so it was better to be safe than fired. "Jim!" You scolded into the phone in a yelling whisper. You sit back down, shove the phone back onto your chest and leaned back in your chair to look over at your bosses' office door, making sure that it was closed. You could

hear Hopper laughing loudly, even with distance between the phone and your ear. You lean forward and put your elbows down onto your desk and finally pull the phone back up to your ear, since it seemed the coast was clear. At least for now. “Hop, you know you can’t call me at work unless it’s important!” You try and sound disappointed that he had called, but your voice seemed much higher than it should have been as it passed through the wide grin that had appeared on your face. It had only been a couple hours since you last saw him but you couldn’t deny that you missed him. “This is important!” He said in a not-so-convincing, overenthusiastic tone. Even though you knew he couldn’t see you, your smile shrank into a thin line and your eyebrow shot up in cynicism. “Fine, okay, what is it?” You leaned into one hand and started to twirl the phone cord between the fingers of the other. “And it better be good, because I’m working on some really, really, important stuff right now and you’re interrupting it.” You finish, the heaviness of your sarcasm weighing down your tone. “Alright then I’ll make it snappy,” He lets out a small huff and you hear him shift in his seat. “I just need to know,” He paused for a moment. “What kind of underwear have you got on right now?” You scoffed at his ‘important’ question and you knew he was only teasing, but you couldn’t help but drag your bottom lip between your teeth at the darkness underlying in his tone. “Jim. You said it was important! You’re so going to get me fired.” You released the cord from your fingers and fall back in your chair, rolling your eyes on the way there. You seemed to do that a lot lately, especially when Jim Hopper was involved. “Baby, I didn’t lie. It is 100% an urgent question that needs answering ASAP. I’ve been sitting at my desk all day with nothing to do except think about how good your mouth felt on me this morning.” You clench your jaw tight and could feel the blood rushing to your cheeks at his words. “Jim- I’m serious, you need to quit.” You say with a stern voice. You knew the more he teased, the harder it would be to keep your thoughts at bay. But you knew he could probably tell by the subtle shakiness in your voice that you really didn’t want him to stop. “Alright, alright, I give up. But there is actually something I wanted to ask you about.” By his playful tone, you were expecting more teasing and a dirty phrase that’ll probably have your thighs clenched tightly together all day. “Is that so? Well then by all means, ask away.” You say paired with a long sigh, attempting to hide your disappointment that he actually did give in. It was a slow day at your office too; you figured if he gave you a little



something to look forward to, the day might go by faster. But just seeing Hopper is more than enough to look forward to. "I need just a small, tiny, little bitty, favor I need you to do for me." You rolled your eyes again, leaning back to peek to check that your boss' door was still closed. "Depends on the favor. But shoot." You cross your legs and use the one planted on the ground to make your chair sway back and forth. "So like I said, I've had absolutely nothing to here at the station, even with this cold ass weather, and I've gone through all of my cigs." You lean your head back and let out a groan. "All of them? Even the emergency ones?" "Well, I haven't gone through those just yet but lookin' at how this day is going, odds are that I will." You let out another small groan as you straighten up before replying. "So let me guess," You cross your free hand across your body. "You want your fragile little lady, to walk out into the freezing cold, alllllll the way down to the store, to grab you a pack of camels?" "Actually I was hoping you'd get me two. And you know I only like the camels without the filters" You uncross your legs and lean forward to put your elbows back on your desk. "Two? But what if I freeze to death? Or catch a cold? Or worse? You sure are asking a lot, Chief." You say as sarcastically as you can muster, your free hand flapping open to add to your dramatics. He lets out a laugh, noting your obvious sarcasm. "I know, baby, I'm so sorry. But you know I wouldn't ask if it wasn't really important." He whines, returning the sarcasm. You can't help but let out a short scoff. "Alright, I suppose I could swing by and grab you your precious packs, since you're so desperate. But it's definitely going to cost you." He had called and played his game, but now you decided it was your turn. "Oh? It'll cost me what exactly?" He asked in a low voice. "How about a favor for a favor?" You hear his chair squeak as he readjusted. "What kind of favor are we talkin', sweetheart?" His voice dangerously low this time. You take a second to think before answering. "Hmmm, I'll let you know once I've decided. Actually let's make it two favors for two favors." You smirk at the move you're about to play. "Wait, now hold on, what's the second favor you're plannin' on doing for me?" He says, a little taken aback. You let out a long, breathy sigh, making the pause before your response last as long as possible. "Black. Lace. The ones with the garter straps you like so much." You hear an abrupt creak of his chair as he takes a sharp breath in before loudly saying "Aw come on, now why you gotta do me like-" You cut him off by hanging up the phone. You let the edges of your mouth rise up

knowing you had totally won this round. After relishing in your victory, you get up from your seat to knock on your boss' door so you could ask if it was all right for you to step out to get the cigs before you forgot. After getting the okay, you grab your coat and bag that was draped over your chair and head towards the front door. As soon as you stepped outside, you immediately regretted your choice of outfit for today. When you left the cabin this morning, it was hardly even chilly and you hadn't heard anything about it getting much colder. So you thought it might be nice to wear a skirt with some panty hose for the last time before the brutal Hawkins winter really set in. Now it seems that time had certainly passed already and you feel that if you stepped down too hard, your frozen legs would shatter. But that didn't stop you from walking as quickly as possible to the small grocery store around the corner to grab Hopper's cigs. It felt like you'd just climbed Everest by the time your frozen ass hits the seat of your chair once again. You stuff the cigarette boxes into your bag and leave your coat on for just minute longer so you could warm up. Since bringing the new computers in, your bosses have kept the office pretty chilly, even with the dropping temperatures as to not overheat the bulky systems. With that, you continued your work of transferring old cases into the new computer system, seeing as there wasn't anything new that required any attention at the moment. Not saying that there was anything other than petty lawsuits over things like whose tree belonged to whom since it was "obviously on their side of the property." You'd be surprised to know that that case lasted over 6 months. But if you were being honest, you really didn't mind. Busy work was kind of your forte, if only there had been a way you could've gotten a degree in that you certainly would have. But this was probably as close as you could get to having a career in it. You glance up at the clock on the wall; it was only 3:09 in the afternoon. You still had a bit of work that you had planned to do for that day but hopefully you could get it done and be home before Jim. There has actually been a couple times when he would actually get home first because you aren't the type to start something like this unless you planned on getting it done in one sitting. You'd really hoped that wouldn't be the case this time, but your thoughts already started to trail off as you idly copied physical print to digital.

### 3. Chapter 3

#### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

After that wonderful first night back in Hawkins, you didn't waste much time trying to get your shit together. You woke up early, grabbed the paper from the driveway and started looking for a new place to live. You circled a few places that were in your small budget that you would visit that day. You ask your sister if she knows of anyone hiring in town, but she was pretty useless in that department as most of her friends were just like her, a simple dedicated house wife who has been blessed with a husband rich enough for them to spend their days drowning in free time. Not that you hated your sister, you just hated her right now. Her life seemed so easy at this moment, but you know how hard she worked to get to where she is today. Honestly, she deserved to have someone else take care of her for a while. But right now, as you drove from shitty neighborhood to shittier neighborhood, you sort of wanted to punch her in the face. You finally found a small studio apartment that rested on top of a bowling alley that seemed pretty decent. The owner said that the price had to be reduced due to the bowling alley's late night patrons who never cease to make noise throughout the night. At this point,

you were so desperate to get off of your sisters couch. Despite the fact that it only been one night, you can feel the tension between you two already growing past the point that either of you could stand. And who knows when another opportunity like this would show up. So you ended up writing a check for the down payment, signed a 6-month lease, and started to dread the process of moving whilst also trying to find a job so you don't have to choose between paying your rent and eating. You had been running around all day you hadn't even noticed that the sun was already starting to set. You decided to pull into a bar downtown that you had passed earlier in the day. You figured you might as well have one night of ignoring your problems. The little bit of cash you had with you was burning a hole in your pocket, dying to be spent on some kind of hard liquor. Maybe even multiple kinds of hard liquor. You make your way into the nearly empty bar, guessing it wasn't quite happy hour yet but that wasn't going to stop you from ordering a well-deserved scotch. You took your time, only taking a sip every few minutes; wanting to savor every last drop and every last second you had not listening to your sister's voice. Maybe if you were lucky, you'd be able to drown out that critical voice in the back of your head too. After your second drink, you noticed more and more people crowding into the bar. You ordered another scotch, this time a double since you weren't sure if you'd be able to get back to the bar to order anything else tonight as even more people started trickling in. You moved to sit in a small booth by yourself; you drop you glass down, and place your elbows on the table to let your face drop into your hands. You had no idea what time it was. You honestly didn't really care. You feel like you haven't slept in years, and it's been pretty clear to you that time wasn't on your side, so it felt good to ignore it for a little bit. Let time know that you weren't so fond of it either. That's when you felt a warm presence build up next to you, so you barely shifted your head to see who decided to bother you. As luck would have it, it just happened to be the only friendly face you knew of at the moment, the concerned face of Jim Hopper. "Is everything alright over here?" He asks, looking down at you. "Oh yeah, over here? Everything is going real swell. What about you, Chief? " You reply, giving him a soft smile to try and act like your life isn't falling apart in front of your eyes. You thought you might have fooled him for a second until you threw back the rest of your double like it was nothing. At this point, you were drunk enough to not feel the burn anymore. He

immediately raised his brows in what you decided was amazement at your talents of drinking (even though you knew it definitely was not) and he shifted into the seat across from yours. "Well, if you must know, my day has been in-credible. Really, it's a riveting story if you'd like to hear about it." He said. Even though you were drunk, you could still tell he was being sarcastic. But you played along anyway, reveling in the good company. "The great Chief Hopper wants to grace me with his tales of bravery in his life on the force? God, I couldn't be more interested!" You say returning with heavy sarcasm, but with a small laugh to make sure he knew you weren't trying to be mean. You just recognized that he was trying to be kind and distract you. It was sweet, but you knew he could distract you by simply standing in front of you, letting you look him up and down. You didn't know if it was the booze or the mid-life crisis talking, maybe it was both. But lord, you've never wanted to run your fingers through someone's hair so badly before than you did right now. You set your empty glass aside and set your chin on the palms of your hands, looking like a kid ready to listen to a fairy tale. "First of all, I told you to call me Jim when I'm off duty, and second, you better get ready for this one, it sure is a doozy." You both laugh and he begins his story of his "wild" day.

## 4. Chapter 4

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

His sarcasm was very well placed; it was the dullest story you've ever heard. But he could've told you that story a hundred times because you could never get tired of hearing his voice. The grittiness of a smoke damaged throat paired with the low grumble of a man who'd been dealt all sorts of different cards from life, all topped off with the smooth tune of tenderness was the prettiest harmony you'd ever heard. Once he finished his exaggerated tale, you took a deep breath in and pushed your shoulders up into the back of the booth, letting your arms follow to stretch your back, fruitlessly attempting to physically shake your thoughts out. You hardly even know this man and yet your fawning over him like a fucking schoolgirl. Not saying you haven't had your fair share of one-night stands and bar bathroom hookups but this was different. Sure, you were ready to climb him like a goddamn tree, but the way he looked at you made your chest tighten so much it almost hurt. Jesus, what fucking sap you'd become. Must be that stupid-little-girl-crush-spell-thing he'd put on you went you first laid eyes on him. Maybe it was ol' Father Time giving you a little something back from all the suffering he'd put you

through. You'd never know for sure, but your anxieties still seemed to get the better of you, which happened just about every time something that makes you feel good started to happen.

"Jesus, you've only known him for what, 24 hours? And he probably doesn't even feel remotely close to the same way. He probably doesn't even think you're attractive; he's for sure just being nice. And let's be honest, the way he looks, odds are he's probably got some gal waiting for him at home, anyways."

You let out a long sigh as you lean back forward and couldn't help but let a small frown weigh down the edges of your lips with the oh-so common disappointment you'd given yourself for the millionth time. You set your hands back down on the middle of the table and let out another short sigh, turning your eyes to the floor next to your booth. He places his own hands on top of yours. You look back up at him slowly, not wanting to make yourself sick by shaking your head around too much. You clanked your knees together and sucked in a sharp breath in response to his touch. He was a lot warmer than you were expecting. Though it might just be the heat flowing from your cheeks causing the slight dampness on your palms. God, you're glad his hands are on top of yours otherwise your clammy hands would've given you away for sure. "Okay, for real this time. Is everything alright?" No one has looked at you like the way he just looked at you in a very long time. You opened your mouth, wanting to pour everything out on the table for him but you think back to your fucking anxieties. 'He's just trying to be nice, just give him something to shut him up but good god not too much. He doesn't want nor deserve to carry your baggage for you, you selfish bitch.' You slam your eyes shut for a moment at your harsh thoughts but quickly open them before you replied. "I'm just having a tough time adjusting, is all, nothing I can't handle. No need to worry." You gave him that same pathetic soft smile, trying to make it believable but as he turned his eyes down at his hands on yours with his jaw clenched, you knew you'd failed at doing so. He dragged his thumb over the top of your hand and let out a sigh. The motion made you clench your jaw and drop your eyes towards his hands, making you acutely aware at how large his fingers were. "If you don't want to tell me what's really going on, you don't have to, I don't want to pry. But is there anything you think I could do to help?" You dwell on this for a moment, letting your eyes move back and forth over the table as you considered his offer. "Actually, I'm really desperate for a job. Know

anyone hiring a law school drop out with half a degree?" You let out a short breathy laugh trying to ease the tension. He squeezes your hands before letting go to grab the napkin from under your empty glass. You won't deny that you already missed his touch. You wiped your sweaty hands on your jeans and gave your thighs a squeeze to help you return to back to reality, reminding you of the things your anxieties so kindly pointed out earlier. "Have you got a pen?" You pat on your pockets, but all you've got are a few spare dollars and your car keys. "Not on me, but I might have one in my car. Walk me out?" He nods and you both scoot out of the booth. You body immediately reminds you of how much you have had to drink and you stumble on your way up from the booth. The warmth of Hopper's hands return to grab a hold of your biceps to stable you. "You good?" He says as he lets out a breathy laugh, trying hard not to make fun of you. "Thanks, yeah. Just- lost my footing for a second." He gives you a pat on the arm before releasing you from his stable grip. You weren't sure if you could handle him touching you again because if he did you were certain you'd melt into a puddle on the floor. As you followed Hopper towards the door, your eyes scan the bar and you just notice that it's nearly empty. You're shocked at how well Hopper could distract you. You quietly chuckle as your mind goes back to that place it went last night. And now that you knew what Hopper's hands felt like on your skin, it'll be harder to get your thoughts out of that place. You make it to your car sitting in the dimly lit parking lot and you shuffle through your glove box and notice the cigarette butt you threw in the car last night. You can't help but smile thinking about that memory and how it's definitely not one you will be forgetting anytime soon. "Aha! Found one, hopefully it works!" You call out to him. You stumble out of your car, your dizziness reminding you again of how drunk you were, and then close the door. You take a few steps closer to the front of your car to Hopper, using one hand to stabilize yourself on the hood and using the other to hand him the pen. "Now I can only give you this information on one condition, I need just one more thing from you." He takes a step closer to you and grabs your wrist. You straighten up as he leans face closer towards yours and you wonder if this is the moment. You know, that moment when your faces are so close you can feel each other's breath and you both just wait for someone to break before you crash into each other. As he moved closer just a millimeter closer he brings your hand to his chest and you start to let you eyes flutter



shut until he rips your keys out of the hand on his chest. "I need you to give me your keys." Your eyes widen and your jaw drops. He lets your wrist out of his grip and leans his head back as he lets out a loud laugh. You can't keep yourself smacking his chest and you turn away from him to lean your back against your car, huffing as you cross your arms. He shoves your keys in his pocket and leans over your hood to write on the napkin he took from the bar. "God damn tease." You mutter under your breath as you look down to watch yourself put one of your legs out to gently kick a rock. You clench your fist as you bring your leg back to quietly punish your drunken self for saying that out loud. You look at him from the corner of your eye to see if he had heard. With his head turned down towards the napkin you notice his wrinkles by his eyes and the edge of his mouth upturned. He absolutely heard. You clench your eyes shut at your embarrassment until he stood upright to hand you the napkin with a name and number written on it. "This is a small firm in town that the station works with a lot, they always seem to be looking for temps so maybe they'd take a pretty college drop out with half a law degree. Honestly, you'd probably be the most promising thing they've seen in months. Maybe years, even." Before he could say anything else, you quickly move away from your car and wrap your arms around his neck, pulling him closer to you. At first he tenses up in surprise, but after a moment he relaxes and lets out a breathy laugh as he wraps his arms around you and gives you a light squeeze. "Oh my god, thank you so much, this really does help a lot. Thank you." You pull away from him but your hands linger on his shoulders and you take notice that his hands also linger on your waist. You look at each other for what felt like forever before quickly moving your hands away and diverting your eyes to anything but one another. You break the silence by clearing your throat. "So since you have my keys, how am I supposed to get home then?" You ask, finally looking back at him, stuffing your arms in your pockets since you weren't so sure what to do with them. "Well obviously I'm not going to let your drive home drunk so I figured I'd just give you a ride. I can swing by your place in the morning and show you where the office is before bringing you back to your car. I mean- only if you wanted!" He said a tad too loud and rubbed the back of his neck as he let's out a sharp breath. You could tell he was just as nervous as you were, which kept your anxieties quiet for once. "That would actually be really nice, thanks. You're too good to me, Hop." You say playfully and take one

hand out of your pocket to pat him on the shoulder as you make your way towards his blazer. The real reason you moved first was because you wanted to walk ahead of him in order to hide the smile you could no longer keep from spreading across your face.

The ride was mostly silent except for when you gave directions and for the few times that Jim would point out things in town for you to look at. He pulled up to your sister's house, Hopper turned his truck off and you both sat quietly for a minute. You were the one to break the silence once again. "Thanks for the ride, Jim. Well, really, thanks for everything. This night would have gone a whole lot different if you hadn't bothered me at my booth." You both turned to look at each other and you gave him a smile. "It's no trouble, really. I mean Hawkins hasn't given you the warmest welcome, so I figured I'd try and make it a little better. At least try to do what I can." You can feel yourself blushing so you turn your face away from him. You can't remember the last time you felt so cared for. Your sister deserved someone to take care of her for a while, but maybe you needed that too, at least for one night. "Well, if you need anything else, my home number and the number to the station are on the back of that napkin there, feel free to call me anytime." You slowly slide out of his truck, not really wanting to leave his side. Before you shut the door you thanked him one more time and wished him goodnight. He waited until you were almost all the way inside before he started his truck up again. You turn before walking inside to wave goodbye to him and he does the same to you before driving away. You feel this sort of twinge of pain in your chest as you watch him drive away. 'Shit, I'm in deep, aren't I?' You throw your head back and let out a quiet groan. You quietly tiptoe inside the house, not wanting to wake up your sister. Once you plop down on the couch, you cover your face with your hands and smile at the night you just had. Thank god you decided to ignore time tonight.

## 5. Chapter 5

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

You continue to type away and smile warmly at the memory. You couldn't help but let out a quiet laugh at how right you were that night. You were definitely in deep. You're surprised at how much deeper you'd fallen since then, as you were pretty damn smitten. You then noticed how damp the collar of your jacket had become. You shed your off your extra layer and took a tissue from the box on your desk to blot away the thin layer of sweat that had developed on your face. Jesus, that man had gotten you all worked up over almost nothing. Just the thought of how you felt when he first touched you and the details you noticed in the way he spoke had your imaginary glasses fogging up. Before your thoughts could take you any further down the list of things Hopper made you feel, you try and shake away the chills and bumps starting to rise up on your arms. You take in a deep breath as you relax your face and stretch out your fingers just above the keys on your keyboard. You look back up at the clock and let out a quiet sound of disappointment as it only read 4:46. You glance over at the other end of your desk at the rather large stack of case files you had planned on getting through today. There was a lot

more files that there usually was at this time of day, but then again you rarely let yourself get this distracted. It still amazed you at how well Hop could distract you. He did it so well he didn't even have to be here to do it. You lightly tap at your keys, not pressing down onto them to actually type anything, deciding whether you had it in your nature to just stop working on your stack at 6, whether you were done or not. You glance back and forth between the stack of papers and your computer screen for a minute before grabbing another file off of the top of the stack and laying it open next to your computer. It's decided. You'll work until 6 and not a minute longer. You thought as you frantically started to type, hoping you could still finish off the stack before then.

After typing for a hot minute, your coworker, Stacy stopped at the opening of your cubicle. You turn in your chair to face her and give her a warm smile.. "Hey there, Stace." She smiled back at you. "Hey Y/N, I'm headed home for the night, just thought I'd pop by to say goodnight!" You knew you should look right behind her head to check the time. But you we're so close to finishing your stack you just couldn't will yourself to move your neck, despite knowing it was probably already 6 or dangerously close it if Stacy was making her way out. "Thanks Stacy, goodnight to you too! I'm just going to finish up here and then I'll be right behind you." You were probably kidding yourself thinking you'd be out just past 6 but maybe saying it out loud would will the universe to make you stop before you got to far gone. "Well, you be careful driving home when you do, I think there's meant to be some pretty nasty snowflakes headed our way real early in the morning, so there's bound to be some nasty icy spots out there joining it's- nasty mistress." You both laugh as she moves away from your desk towards the glass doors. You quickly turn around as an excuse to not look up at the clock and you dive right back into your typing.

You read and type and read and type until you finally reach the last word on the last page of the last case in your stack. Finally done with your work, you quickly stand up, throw your jacket over your shoulders and wrap the strap of your bag around your hand as you started to shut down your computer. You look behind you and see that the back half of the small office was dark and you wondered when the lights had gone down, your curiosity finally willing yourself

to look at the clock; 2:57 am. 'Shit.' You tightly clench your eyes shut and let out a quiet but long groan. You open your eyes, shove your hand into your bag to pull out your keys and started your trek towards your car. You had only reached just outside of your cubicle before you stopped at the sound of the click of your boss' door. Your eyes met as he made his way out of his office and you gave him a small smile to greet him. "Working late again, I see?" He asks you as he turns to turn off his office light and shut his door. "Yeah, you know me, it's hard for me to stop once I get started." You say a little more tense than you'd like, wanting to hurry him along so you could get home as soon as possible. Though you weren't sure it mattered so much now. Either Hopper was home and asleep or he wasn't home and wouldn't be home at all that night since he'll just be back to the station early the next morning. "I don't think I've ever seen you at the office this late, though." He points out as you make your way towards the front door together. "Must have been one hell of a goal you set today!" He flicks off the lights and you hold open the door for him trying not to scream as the freezing wind hit your nearly bare legs. "You go through those cases too fast and you won't have much else to do around here. At least until Mrs. Grady- or should I say Mrs. Kendall, though I'm not sure how much longer she will be Mrs. Kendall," He steps through the door and you wait for him to lock up. You cross your arms and tightly grabbing ahold of your biceps, trying to insulate your body as best you can as the temperature started to make your face go numb. "Before she files for another divorce! What'll this one be number, what? Six?" You let out a shaky laugh; as you couldn't keep your body from convulsing at its desperate attempt to keep itself warm. "I'm pretty sure this will be her eighth, Mr. Harrison." He lets out a loud laugh as you both head towards the small parking lot behind the businesses that lined the street. It was still painfully cold, but once you turned the corner, the wind was blocked by the surrounding buildings, making it just a tad more bearable. Once you started to head in slightly different directions towards your cars you loosened your grip of one of your hands on your arm to give a quick wave goodbye to Mr. Harrison. "Goodnight Mr. Harrison, drive safe!" He gives you a soft smile and a quick wave before turning his back towards you, walking in the direction of his car. You tumble into your car, shutting the door as fast as you possibly could. Your numb shoved the key into the ignition, turning the key with one hand and crossing the other over to adjust the heat.

You sat for just a moment to let your car heat up and you bring your hands to cup over your mouth to try and warm them up by blowing your hot breath onto them. As much as you were dying to cling onto the warm body you knew so well, you prayed to god Jim wasn't home. If he knew you were driving in this weather, he would kill you. Once you were thawed enough to at least feel your fingers again, you threw your car into reverse and pulled out of your parking spot. It hadn't started snowing yet, so you took that as a good sign, but the subzero temperatures you just endured still had you driving slowly. You drove a bit faster than you were comfortable in this kind of situation though, but since there wasn't anyone else on the road this late, you kept it up. You sped up a little more knowing that there was also the chance that Jim could actually be home. There was nothing you wanted more than have him to warm you up. The more you thought about his body on yours, the more you thought about the favors he owes you. The places your thoughts went as you drove along had you eventually turning the heat down in your car a little, the heat on your face begin to rise. But that definitely wasn't the only place you felt heat start to grow. With this, you pressed down a little more on the gas pedal. You finally turned onto the paved path that lead to the cabin you two shared. You could almost blame the heat blasting from your AC for how red your face was if it weren't for how tight you were holding your thighs together. After what seemed like hours, the cabin finally made its way into view. You slowed down, not sure if Hopper was home just yet and not wanting to take the chance of him thinking you drove home like you just did. That's when you spot it. The beautiful tan and off-white covered truck that you've been longing to see. You park your car just slightly off behind his so that he can leave without having to wake you up to move your car in the morning. You get out of your car and walk around the front, not even noticing the cold this time. You knew you'd feel bad about waking Jim up later, but you couldn't deal with the rolling boil that was happening in your stomach the way that Jim could. Like you said, it's hard for you to stop something once you got started. But before you even got two steps away from your car, you remembered the cigarettes. You turned around and opened the passenger door and stepped one foot forward to grab them from your bag that was lying in the seat. But just before you took your next step you felt your foot give way. 'Fucking ice.' You say under your breath. You straddle the patch of black ice to the best of your ability and lean over to reach

into your bag, sticking your hand in to pull out the packs. You slowly slid your foot back on the ice until you reached a less slippery surface. As soon as you were able, you couldn't wait any longer. So you slammed your door shut, not worrying about the noise seeing as you were just about to wake Jim up anyhow, made a quick 180 turn, and making your way back towards the stairs as fast possibly could without breaking into a full blown run. Thank god Jim couldn't see how fucking eager you were being right now because you knew he would never stop teasing you about it. You couldn't help but laugh a little on your way towards the stairs, too excited to hold it in. Once you reach the steps, you take one step, two steps, and then there's another give under your foot. The worn wood of the second step drags roughly across the front of your knee on the way down, making you wince. You let out a small yelp as your ass hits the cold ground. You sit there for a second, groaning before starting to make an effort to get up. This is what you get for being so god damn eager. But before you could even try, you hear heavy footsteps grow louder and louder before you saw the main light of the living room shine through the front windows. You knew it was only Jim probably just making sure you hadn't cracked your skull on the pavement, so you continued to try and get up you're interrupted again by the sound of the front door opening and slamming against the house. "Jesus, are you alright? No-no-no stop-stop! Don't try and get up, let me help you!" Jim cried out to you as he swiftly made his way down the stairs.

## 6. Chapter 6

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

It was earlier in the morning than you ever cared to be up. With or without a hangover. But nevertheless, there your sister was, violently shaking you awake. You opened your eyes, but you quickly covered them back up once you were attacked with a migraine and nausea from your hangover. You turned to shove your face into the back cushions of the couch to escape your sister's rough hand. "Jesus, Lorelai! What is it?" You spat at her. "Is there anything you want to tell me? Maybe the reason why I have a cop waiting for you in my kitchen? What did you do last night? Jesus, you better not have done something stupid." She said to you in a sharp yelling whisper, leaning over you so she could force her rapid-fire questions directly into your ear. "What the hell are you talking about? What cop?" You weren't in a state to preform basic functions, let alone try and put the pieces together. "Y/N. Get. Up. Now. It's the fucking sheriff." She whispered a little quieter in your ear since she didn't want anyone to know her precious polished mouth was capable of saying such a disgusting word as "fucking". Though as you recall, it was her who has influenced your potty mouth when you were younger. You open your



eyes wide, now remembering last night's events. You turn back around to sit up. "Him and Tommy are in the kitchen," She runs her finger through your tangled hair and she speaks, still using her mom voice. "So we're going to get up and me and Tommy will leave you two be so you can sort out your mess." She licks her thumb and rubs hard under your eyes. You swat her hand away in disgust. "Ew, stop! Alright mom, but it's not what you think. I went to have a drink last night and the sheriff was there and he helped me get home. He just wants to get me back to my car and show me around town is all. Jesus." Your sister gives you a skeptical look with her eyebrow raised. She brings her hands back up to your hair and you smack them away as you stand up from the couch. She firmly grabs your arm as you try and walk past her. "Just- I'm not mad at you, okay?" She rubs her thumb up and down your arm. "I just worry, alright?" You gently place your hand over hers. "I know, I know. Thanks, but trust me- I don't want to fuck things up anymore than you do." Her jaw falls open and she takes her hand from under yours to lightly smack your shoulder. You stick your tongue out at her and continue to walk towards the kitchen. You pass by the open door of the guest bathroom and glance at yourself in the mirror. There wasn't much you could do to make yourself look less like death right now so you brush yourself off and head into the kitchen.

You and Hopper spent a majority of the morning together as he showed you around Hawkins. You wanted to tell him that you knew about most of the places that he was pointing out to you, since you had grown up here after all. But you liked listening to him talk. Especially since you weren't so sure how great you'd be at conversation right now with your hangover now in full swing. You were surprised that riding in the truck hadn't made you more nauseous but it's probably since Hopper was driving so slowly once you had hit downtown. He made sure to give you as good of a look as possible at the things he was pointing out to you. It was sweet how hard he was trying to make you feel welcome, but you wondered if he was taking his time because he liked spending time with you as much as you liked spending time with him. The only good thing

about being hungover is that your brain was so foggy that your anxieties had a hard time getting through. "And this right here is Harrison and Grant Law, the attorney's office I was talking about. It's early but I think there might be someone inside we could talk to about you applying if you wanted to stop and head in for a second." He glanced over at you, meeting your eyes, making you both aware that you were just staring at him. Your eyes widen slightly in embarrassment and you let out a short cough so you could let your eyes drop down for a moment. Once you looked back up however, he had already turned to look out at the road. "Oh, we?" You asked him as you also turned to look through the windshield. "Well, I mean, I figured since you don't know anyone, I might not be the greatest reference of character but- I don't know, maybe it could help? Unless you don't want me to?" "NO! I MEAN-" You say far too loudly, especially falling on your sensitive ears. You pause to try and regain some pride, but to no avail. "Oh, so you don't want me to?" Hopper pulls into a parking lot behind the stretch of buildings you had just passed and parks his truck into a spot before looking over at you in confusion. "No, I meant- Jesus, sorry, I meant no, I do want you to. I could use all the help I can get, especially with me being all-" You gesture up and down your body, "like this." You let out a breathy laugh. "Like what? You seem alright to me." He teased with a smirk. "Shut up." You huff at him. "What? Having some second thoughts about that last double you downed last night?" "Ha-ha, yes, you're very funny. If only I hadn't been woken up so early this morning, I could've had some time to recover." You say as you tilt your head to raise your brows up at him. "Now can we please get back to 'hospitality hopper' please?" You roll your eyes at him as he laughs at you. "Alright, alright, only teasing, sweetheart." You turn to open the car door to hide the wide grin that grew on your face when he used that pet name. Even if he called everyone sweetheart, it still made your face warm to hear him call you that. It was certainly something you could get used to.

It wasn't long before you got called in for an interview once you put in application to Harrison and Grant. You were worried your interests in strictly being a temp and nothing more, even in the future, would throw them off. But during the interview, they made it known that

they've always benefited from having temps in the office but since they were only temps they moved on to other practices quickly once they were done with law school. So after the easiest interview you think you've ever had in your life, they handed you a packet full of office conduct rules and other things of the like and told you they'd be looking forward to seeing you Wednesday morning. But easy street wasn't as long as you hoped, as you were reduced to paid intern status when you first started out. This consisted of pointless coffee runs, meticulous file organizing, and constant errand running. It wasn't the worst thing however, as every once in a while they would send you over to the station, giving you a chance to see Jim. Sometimes, if you were really lucky, you'd make it just in time for the two of you to head out for lunch together. You felt closer and closer to him as you spent more time together and you found yourself making every excuse possible to swing by the station. But you weren't so sure if Jim saw you as anything more than a good friend. It had been over a month of you two sharing kind words and small touches between file shares, opportune lunch meetings, and even phone calls to the office making sure you had gotten everything you needed; even though he had just triple checked that you had everything before you left the station five minutes earlier. But he still hadn't asked you out and it started to make you a bit weary. There was a part of you that thought it would be enough to just be friends, but there was a connection you felt to Jim that almost felt wrong to try and ignore. But maybe he really just wasn't interested, or maybe he isn't sure if you wanted anything more. You figured you'd both probably die waiting for the other to let their feelings known, so perhaps you should just ask him straight up. Luckily, you were already on your way to the station to drop off some signed paperwork and even though it's probably not the most appropriate time or place to ask someone out on a date, you can't let this eat away at you any longer. As you turn the corner, your face collides into someone's chest. You let out an 'oof' as your papers fall from your hands onto the sidewalk. "I am so sorry, I wasn't looking where I was going I-" You start to say before you're interrupted. "Y/N?" You look up and see those deep blue eyes and suddenly your determination melts away. "Oh, Jim! Hi, um. Oh-" The both of you crouch down to pick up your papers at the same time but bonk heads on the way down. You both stand up, laughing awkwardly and rubbing the tops of your heads before he gestures you to crouch down first before he

follows your actions. "So, were you just headed to the station?" He asks as he hands you a few of the papers. "Yeah I was, just dropping off some signed- uh- stuff. Where were you just headed?" You slide the papers back into the manila folder and hold it against your chest as you look back at him. "Well, I- uh-" He looks down at his feet and rubs the back of his neck before letting out a quick sigh. "I was actually coming to see you, there's- uh something I've been meaning to ask you-uh about." His eyes shoot up to meet yours again. "There's something I've been meaning to ask you about too, the files kinda gave me an excuse to come by and talk with you." You let out a breathy laugh and bounce up on your toes a bit to try and let out a bit of anxiety. "You go first." You both say at the same time. You both look down and laugh. Jesus, you haven't felt this awkward since you tried asking Terry Isaac to the Snow Ball in seventh grade. "I'll go first, if that's okay." He says to you, you nod in response and give him a soft smile. "Well, I don't know your schedule but I'm off tomorrow and I was wondering if-" He takes a sharp breath in but he doesn't look away from you. "I was wondering if you might wanted to get drinks tonight?" Suddenly the determination is back but under false pretenses. You took his warm tone as him asking you on a friend-date rather than a date-date. "Oh, um I don't work until late in the afternoon tomorrow so I think there'd be enough time to heal from a potential hangover if I get one, so sure! I'd love to!" You think the steadiness in your voice was due to the fact that you were still stuck in the safety of friend bubble. It's only confirmed when he smiles at you and his voice rises up a bit. "Great! Can I swing by your apartment around 8?" You return a soft smile. "Sounds good to me! I'll see you then?" He nods at you and you both turn to walk in different directions. You can't help but feel disappointment weighing on your face that this really wasn't anything more than just friends getting drinks together. It was only heightened when you thought about how this relationship between you and Hopper would only ever be a friendship.

God, what was I thinking? I was just about to walk into his office and make a complete ass of myself. A date? Jesus. We're just friends and we'll never be anything more. Oh but god, what if he does meet someone else? How the hell am I supposed to be the supportive best

friend? I don't know how I'll be able to deal with that kind of heartbreak. I guess it's better than him not being in your life at all.

After taking a few steps back towards your office, you remember that you were meant to drop the files in your hand back at the station. But as you turn around, your face hits that familiar chest once again. He puts his hands on your arms to separate you two as you both laugh. "Hop, we've got to stop meeting like this, you're going to break my nose next time!" "Well if you would only watch where you were going, you wouldn't be shoving your nose in my chest all the time!" You both lean your heads back slightly and squint your eyes as you laugh together. Maybe spending time with a friend tonight didn't seem like such a terrible thing. If that meant more of this- maybe you could live with it. You just weren't sure for how much longer before your heart started to really take damage however. "Well, I just wanted to make sure of something before tonight." You felt your heart skip a little, desperately hoping he was going to say what you were hoping he would say. You notice that his hands still haven't left your sides as he talks to you. Your anxieties haven't been right so far, what makes you think they would be right this time? "You know that I just asked you on a date, right?" You felt your cheeks get warm and you look down, only letting a closed mouth smile show your excitement even though you were screaming in your head. "I mean, I'm not going to lie- I wasn't so sure but that's what I was hoping," You look back up at him, still grinning. "But thanks for clarifying." He grins, taking one of his hands away from your arms to drag it down his pink face as he looks away from you for a moment before looking down at his feet. You look down at your feet as well, but can't help but laugh at how you giddy you two were acting right now. Two grown ass adults, acting like love-struck teenagers. "Hop-" You both lift your heads up to meet each other's eyes. "Yeah?" He rubs his thumb up and down your arm. You let in a sharp breath at this motion. Now that you know that he feels at least a little bit of the same way as you do, you gain more confidence and think two can play at this game. "I just need one thing from you," You take a step closer to him, your bodies nearly touching and bring your mouth to his ear. He drops his hand from your arm. You can hear his breath getting heavier and feel his body growing slightly warmer. What you

can't see is how tightly Hopper is holding his eyes shut, trying to concentrate on keeping himself from placing his lips on your neck. You let out a small breath into his ear before shoving the file of papers under his tense arm. "I need you to get these to Flo for me, I have to get back to work." You quickly peck his cheek before you step back down onto your heels as you laugh obnoxiously at him. "God damn tease" You gasp loudly and hit him on the chest. "So you did hear! God, I hate drunk me." You groan and shake your head as he now laughs at you. "I have to get back too, so I'll see you tonight?" "See you tonight." You both smile at one another before turning to walk away. Now out of Jim's sight, you throw your hands to drag down your scarlet, grinning face as you practically skip back to your office.

Jim picks you up about ten minutes earlier than he said he would, but you'd been ready since about 6:30 anyhow. Not that you'd let him know that. You've had your fair share of first dates, but none of them had ever made you as nervous as you were right now. Probably because those first dates were with men you only planned on spending that one night with. But with Jim, it was different. God, you hated that naïve cliché. But you guess it's a cliché for a reason because it was definitely true when it came to you and Jim. You wanted a future with him that didn't just last one night and you have never wanted that with anyone before now. You weren't sure if that scared or excited you, but right now you were definitely scared that you would for sure, without a doubt, fuck this up. Your leg bounced up and down rapidly and your fingers wrapped tight over the edge of the seat, your body desperately trying to rid itself of this nervousness. Your pace didn't waver until Jim reached over and gently gripped your knee as he drove. "Would it help if I told you that I'm just as nervous?" He glanced over at you with a genuine face, letting you know that he was being serious. "Nervous? Me? I have no idea what you're talking about." He moves his hand from your now still leg back on the steering wheel and lets out a quick laugh before he raises an eyebrow. "Oh okay, so you're telling me that you've developed restless leg syndrome since the time I last saw you?" You purse your lips to keep yourself from cracking a smile. "Maybe I did, maybe I didn't, what's it to you? Need something to put down on your

insurance so you can retire and collect unemployment? Is that why you asked me out, trying to get some firsthand knowledge on the disease? Well I'll have you know it's very serious and a very personal journey so it'll take a few drinks to get me to spill anything." He laughs and you realize that your body was still trying to release the tension by letting your mouth run through this stupid theory. You let out an awkward laugh and a shaky sigh before speaking again. "Okay, maybe I am nervous. Okay, maybe I'm really nervous." He looks over to you and smiles. "I am too, but hey we're about 30 seconds out from liquid courage and then maybe the woodpecker will calm down enough for us to have a good time." "Well good, because I'm certainly having a terrible time right now." You look over at him and smirk to let him in on your sarcasm but his brows furrow together and he clenches his jaw. "Hop, I was only kidding." "No, no-look." You look out at the overflowing parking lot of the bar. "Oh my god, I don't think I've ever seen anything in Hawkins this busy! Maybe we should try a different spot?" You look over at him as his eyes dart back and forth. "What day is it?" "Um, Wednesday?" "The date, jackass." "March...17th." You lean your head back on the seat's headrest and let out a playful groan. "Saint Patrick's Day, oh no." You throw your hands over your eyes and let them fall before looking back over at Hopper. His brows are still furrowed and his mouth has fallen into a slight frown. "I'm so sorry, I should've checked the date before asking you out, and every place is going to be like this so I can take you home." You let out a short laugh and rest your hand on Hopper's thigh. "Jim, it's okay, really. I'm a pretty experienced Saint Patty's day bar patron so the crowd really isn't a turn off for me. It'll be fun, just park your damn car." You pinch his side, hard. He winces, probably more towards the surprise than the actual force. "Ow, what the hell was that for?" You laugh at his serious reaction. "No green, dummy." His face finally relaxes and he smiles before pinching your arm. "You're not wearing green either!" You wince and pull away overdramatically. "OW, EASY! Well, how do you know I'm not wearing any green?" You huff at him but let the corner of your mouth turn upwards, hoping he would catch your drift. He looks you up and down before focusing on finally pulling into a spot. "What do you mean, you obviously aren't wearing anything gree- oh." He presses a little too hard on the brakes and you both jolt forward. Your eyes clamp shut and your head leans back as you laugh at him. "Come on, Major Tom and don't worry- I'll protect you from those

nasty Irishmen.” He looks down and lets out a breathy laugh before you two leave the car.

The cars outside made it seem like there were a lot of people in the bar but there was WAY more than just a lot. You knew that you and Jim weren't the type to be nervous in a big crowd but that didn't stop you from both reaching to grab tight at each others hand before pushing your way towards the bar. There wasn't anywhere to sit so after you two got your drinks; you headed as far away from the makeshift dance floor as possible to try and lessen the volume of the cheesy Irish music blasting through the speakers on the other end of the bar. You still had to stand pretty close to one another in order to hear each other, but neither of you minded. “So, do you watch rugby?” You asked him. “Do I watch what?” He turned his ear towards your mouth, as he couldn't hear you over the cheers of the people watching the match at the bar. “I said, do you watch-“ You were interrupted by a hard pinch on your ass, one that definitely did not come from Jim. You turn abruptly around to glare at the greasy, pissed drunk man who just fucked with the wrong gal. “Excuse me, but what the fuck do you think your doing?” You felt Jim press up against your back to try and hear what was going on but you stuck your hand behind you to push him back. No need for him to jeopardize his job over something you could handle yourself. “No green, darlin'. You know the rules.” You can feel how hot your face what getting in reaction to his shitty excuse. Not that any excuse for sexual harassment isn't a shitty one. “I'm well aware, dickhead. But how bout' we shut the fuck up, walk away, and stop putting our greasy hands on what isn't ours.” “Have you got any Irish in you?” “What the hell did I just-“ “Cuz' I could be the Irish in you tonight-“ He takes a step closer towards you, you lift your hand to slap him but are interrupted by Jim's arm moving your body to the side as Jim's fist came into contact with the scumbag's jaw.

You lead Jim around the side of the building and gently push him against the wall as you look over to make sure no one had followed you out. Heavy breaths push out of your open mouthed grin and you let out a laugh before moving back over to a not-so-chipper Jim. You



looked him up and down before gently placing your hands on his arms but keeping them outstretched so that he could have room to breathe. His hands were at his sides, his knuckles white from how tightly his hands were clenched. His chest was falling and rising quickly as he breathed loudly through his nose. His eyes were clenched shut and his brows linked tightly together. You hated seeing him like this. As much as you loved how he stood up for you back there, you would gladly never have it happen again if you didn't have to see how his body wrestled with pain, anger, and sorrow right before your eyes. You carefully took one of your hands and placed your fingers under his chin to guide his head to lift up to face yours. "Hop, everything is okay now. Could you look at me?" He opened his eyes and once they met yours you gave him a soft smile. He lets out a long sigh from his mouth and he slightly relaxes his face. "God dammit, I'm so sorry – I shouldn't have gotten that mad but fuck! No I'm not sorry; he put his hands on you! Shit I should've- I'm so sorry I shouldn't have even-" You close the space between you to and take his head between your hands before placing your lips onto his. He resists at first, not letting go of his anger right away, but once you push your hips against his to get him to lean back against the wall, he brings one hand behind your and the other on your waist to deepen the kiss. You had both been waiting for this for so long and with the emotions running high, the moans that escaped your lips couldn't help from being as loud as they were. He responded to your noises with quiet grunts against your mouth and desperately grabbing at your body. You pull away from his mouth but kept close enough that your foreheads are still touching. Both of your eyes stay shut as you both release breathy laughs. "It's okay, Hopper. Not that I encourage you sacrificing your job to deal with something that I can handle," You move your face to his ear like you did earlier that day. "It was definitely sexy." He lets out another breathy laugh before placing his lips onto your neck like he had so badly wanted to do when you did this to him the first time. You let out a hum as your wrap your arms around his neck to encourage him to keep going. He squeezes your hips gently before kissing down to where your neck meets your shoulder. "Sexy as it may be, I still shouldn't have punched him," You let out a quiet moan as he places an opened mouth kiss onto the pressure point on your shoulder. "At least not the third time." You laugh and pull back to face him and rest your hands on his shoulders. "Maybe not, but he definitely deserved worse so I think we can let it

slide this time.” He closes his eyes and groans as he lets his forehead fall on yours. “Sorry for the lousy first date.” You put your hands back on the sides of his head and bring him in for another soft kiss. “Hop, it was far from lousy, “ You say hovering over his mouth. “And the night isn’t over yet.” You pull away to look at his raised eyebrow and smirk plastered on his face. “Oh? And what did you have in mind, sweetheart?”

You’d think after a kiss like that, you’d be fucking in no time. But once Hopper drove you home and you asked him to come up, he politely declined and invited you to lunch the next day instead. It confused you a little then sure, but maybe he just wanted to cool off after nearly killing a man that night, so you left it be. It would happen when it happened. Except it didn’t. Two weeks, 3 more dates. 2 months, 2 sleepovers. 3 months, over the clothes squeezing. And now here the two of you were, creeping up on your FIFTH MONTH anniversary, and still no sex. Not even oral. Not that the two of you hadn’t gotten dangerously close but every time you did Hopper would stop you. At first it didn’t bother you much, he let you know about his history with women and how most of them never went past one night and how he wanted this to be different. You let him know about your past too, letting him know you understood and felt the same. And it’s not like you couldn’t take care of that itch yourself for the time being. But as the time went on and the more familiar you got with each other, the more you desperately wanted him. It had gotten to the point where you couldn’t even hear his voice without getting wet. But you didn’t push him; you didn’t want him to think that this was just about sex for you. It definitely was not just about sex for you when it came to your relationship with Hopper. Not even a little. You’ve been ready to pounce him since day one, sure, but the way treats you and the way he talks to you means more than any orgasm ever did. If he told you that he’s just unable to have any kind of sex but he still wanted to be with you, than you could live honestly with that. But not right now. Not while you are literally straddling his waist on the couch in your apartment, peeling your top off. His mouth attacks the skin between your breasts and you lift your head up and close your eyes as you let out a small moan. You wrap your fingers in his hair as you bring your nose to inhale the top of his

head. God, he smelled so good. Like coffee and cigarettes and whatever generic soap he rubs through his hair. Whatever it was, it might as well be fucking crack. You rip his mouth away from your body to take his lips against yours again, slipping your tongue between his lips. He greeted your tongue with his as he drags his arms over your back and pulls you closer to him. He moves his mouth down to trail deep, opened mouth kisses down your jaw and neck. You groan as the hairs on your neck stand up. You reach down to pull at the bottom of his shirt, but once your hands graze over his belt buckle you knew that you didn't give a shit about what he was wearing as long as it's wasn't pants. But once you start to fumble with his belt he tears his mouth from your neck and grabs your wrists to pull them away. You can't help but let out a whine from the absence of his mouth against your skin. "What's wrong? Am I hurting you?" You shift your legs in his lap, hoping to god that that was the problem and you could continue now that you've adjusted. He smiles briefly as he let's out a sigh to slow his heavy breathing. "No baby, you aren't hurting me, I just think we should stop before we get ahead of ourselves." He puts his hands on your thighs to lead you off of his lap. "Okay, that's totally fine." It totally wasn't. The throbbing that was happening in between your legs had gone far past the point of pleasure and you were now hurting for his cock to be inside of you. It's been five months and you could care less if he was 2 inches or 20, as long as you could have your hot as hell boyfriend fucking you as hard as possible. You watched him head into your small kitchen to grab glasses of water for the two of you. You tried not to get mad, but god dammit, you were. It takes you way longer now to reach the road of reasons as to why he might not want to sleep with you and why you should respect those reasons. But you've only gotten the same thing from him every time you ask: "I just want to take it slow". But five months is very, very, VERY, slow. He comes back over to you and hands you your glass of water before he sits next to you on the couch. You smile at him, not wanting him to think that you are in any way upset with him. "Hey there" He says as he reaches his arm around you. You snuggle up to him and take a sip of your water. Trying anything to cool yourself down and have a regular conversation with Jim that wasn't about fucking. "Hi there" You tease back at him. You both sit in silence for a minute before Jim starts to get up. He reaches down and grabs your shirt to hand to you and you reluctantly slip it back on. He walks over to grab his work

shirt before you interrupt him. "I know you don't want to go any further tonight and that's fine but-" He looks at you with those stupid blue eyes. "Could you still stay over? I miss you when you're gone and it keeps me up." You smile warmly up at him. What you wanted to say was 'could you let me in on the secret of why you don't want to fuck your girlfriend?' but you'd rather have him like this than not at all. So you left that question to be answered at another time. "Well since you said that you miss me, and I wouldn't want to interrupt your beauty sleep. You definitely could use some." Your jaw falls open and you get up to stride over to him so you can punch his arm. "You're one to talk, old man!" He lets out a low, playful, growl before scooping you up into his arms and running to throw you on the bed. You don't make it easy for him though, as you kick, squirm, and scream on the way over. "James Hopper! I invite you into my home and you manhandle me like that! Some nerve you have." He stands over you before pulling you over to kiss you on the top of your head. "I think the term your looking for is balls. Some balls I have." He shoves you over so you fall on your back into the pillows on your bed before he heads into your bathroom. "Not that I would know, I've never seen them, you ass," You whisper to yourself before getting up and getting ready for bed.

You slept pretty soundly for someone who was as wound up as you were. But that doesn't mean your mind didn't wander. You had the day off so it was the perfect opportunity for your anxieties to run wild. You turn over onto the side Jim had slept on and slam your face down onto his pillow. "WHY. WON'T. YOU. HAVE. SEX. WITH. ME?" You yell into the pillow. You let out a load groan as you forced yourself to sit up. You look over and see the note Jim had left on your bedside table.

'Thanks for the beauty sleep. Had to head to work and didn't feel like dealing with the beast (that's you when I wake you up to say bye, you asshole) I'll call you around lunch to make sure you've actually gotten out of bed. Hop.'

You crushed it in your hands and threw it across the room before flopping on your back in frustration. What could it possibly be? Does he have some weird mutilated penis? A giant mole on his balls that he's embarrassed of? Maybe he's not a grower or a shower and is worried I'll leave him for his sad excuse for a dick. You let out a laugh at the absurdity of your thoughts. Since being with Jim your anxieties have gotten a lot nicer. Partially due to the way Jim praises you. It's easy to blow off the sweet nothings he tells you but there are times when he gets so specific with his compliments that you can't help but take them to heart. You and him were the same in thinking that actions were much louder than words and that sometimes actions were easier than words, even. But every once in a while you'd both give in and give each other that confirmation that you were looking for. Except for right now. You had no idea what Hopper was thinking or what his reasoning was. Which is why your anxieties started to venture from silly and nice to serious and cruel.

But really, maybe you shouldn't have told him about your past. He probably is thinking about all of those other men you've fucked and is turned off by it. Honestly, there probably was a time when he did want to fuck you, but you said something to fuck it up. He probably isn't even attracted to you in the slightest. And Jesus could you be any more fucking desperate? Why don't you just head over to the station and fuck him at his desk if you want his dick so fucking badly. He'll probably fuck you and then leave you and tell everyone you WERE SOME HUGE FUCKING NYMPHO AND THANK GOD HE ISNT WITH YOUR CRAZY ASS ANYMORE.

Even though you weren't making a sound, you could feel the tears falling from your eyes at the harshness of your thoughts. They were back and with a vengeance. You can't remember the last time they had gotten this loud. You turned over on your side and curled into a ball, taking deep breathes as you try and slow down and bring forth a voice of reason.

First of all, he told you about his past first and made it very clear that he was accepting of yours. I don't think I have ever touched or spoken to anyone the way he does to me that I wasn't attracted to. He does want you, he does. You just need to be patient. If he wanted to tell you the reason he would've told you by now. And you just need to respect whatever reason he does bring to the table, alright? Okay.

You sit up with your legs hanging off of the side of the bed and take a huge breath in and back out. You decide to call Jim instead of just waiting around him to call you. You could really use a sweet nothing right now. Or to just know that he's sitting on the other line. You call twice but he doesn't answer either time. You call the main phone at the station and leave a message with Flo to have him call you when he gets the chance. You get up and go through your list of quick fixes that you do when you're having a bad day, starting with taking a long shower.

A few hours had gone by and you were definitely feeling better up until you started to think about why Jim hadn't called you yet. It wasn't unlike him to say he would call and then get caught up at the station with something. But he's never failed to call you back once you left a message with Flo. No matter how brief the call would be, he would always let you know he got your message, was doing okay, and was thinking of you. It left a bad taste in your mouth.

Or maybe he just doesn't think you're interested in having sex with him? Sure, you're responsive but are you responsive enough? Maybe when he tells you he wants to slow down he really doesn't want you to stop. No, no, no, that would be wrong. Even if that were what he wanted, you would never be the kind of person to keep going once someone had said they wanted to stop.

Now your voice of reason and anxieties were at war with each other. Going back and forth, over and over, while you attempted to make dinner. It was only 4:00 but you needed something to keep you occupied.

You started psychoanalyzing every second of every time you had ever gotten remotely close to having sex. Which was the BIGGEST FUCKING MISTAKE you could've made because now you were in your car at 3 am, driving towards the station. You had called his house six times and there was no answer. You were going to call the office to see if he was there but you knew he was. Your skin was on fire as you made it remember how it felt every time Jim's calloused hands would run over it. You couldn't tell if what was making your thighs stick to your leather seat was sweat or your slick. Honestly, it was probably both. Your bud was so swollen and sensitive that you drove with your legs as far apart as possible because any friction pressed onto your mound would have you falling over the edge so hard that you were positive that you would crash. But what a way to go. You thought as you finally pulled into the station and abruptly pushed yourself out of the car. You practically stomped all the way through the office, not caring if anyone was even there, before pausing in front of Jim's office door.

You can do this; just tell him how you feel. Not how you're literally feeling, I mean emotionally speaking. Not like how fucking horny you are I mean-

Your thoughts are interrupted by the sound of Jim's door clicking as he opens it slightly to peak out of his office. "Y/N? What are you-" You interrupt him by pushing the door open enough for you to slip through and grabbing his face in your hands to kiss him. He hesitates at first as you use your body to push him against his desk, but then gives in by wrapping his arms around you and sliding his tongue over your bottom lip. You moan against his mouth and begin unbuttoning his shirt. He grabs your shoulders and pulls you away from him as he

lets out a breathy chuckle. "Y/N, Y/N, as much as I love this surprise-" You stop him by gently placing a hand over his mouth. "Please just- listen to me more a second, okay?" He nods and you take your hand away before taking a step so that you could pace in front of him. "Y/N, what's going on? Are you feeling alright?" You stop pacing and move back over to stand in front of him, but not touching him, as you're worried he might want to storm out after you're done talking to him. "Yes. I mean, no. No, I'm really not." He brings his hands to rub up and down your biceps but you lift your arms up to shoo them away. "Okay... well tell me about it, Y/N, I'm right here, what is it?" God, you liked him. You liked him a lot. So much so that the word 'like' seemed to not cut it anymore. "I just- I just don't understand. I want to. I really want to understand and be respectful because if you wanted to tell me you would tell me and I just- I want all of these things but I don't know if I can keep this up without-" You let out a shaky breath and pause for a minute. "Y/N, if I wanted to tell you what?" You hadn't even looked at his face once since you came in here, and you certainly couldn't do it now. "Y/N, please look at me." Jesus, maybe he really was a mind reader. You darted your eyes up to his and ignoring his expression. Better to just rip the bandaid off. "Why don't you want to have sex with me?" His eyes widened a bit and his lips parted as he let out a small, sharp breath. "W-what?" You couldn't tell if that was a laugh or a hitch in his breathing. "I said why don't you want to have sex with me? And please don't tell me that I'm just making this up, because I know that I'm not. The past dozen times we have gotten even relatively close to having sex, you stop. At first, I was okay with it, and I'm sure I will be okay with it but Jesus, Hop! There's no way you don't want me as bad as I want you. So what is it? Please tell me, I swear whatever it is won't make me love you any less." Your eyes widen at what just came out of your mouth. Even though it was true, you did love him, you prayed to god that he did not just hear that. But by the way he stood back up from leaning on of his desk and let his eyes fall down to look at you and the way the corners of his lips were twitching, you knew that he did. "Did- did you just say that you love me?" Your eyes squint shut. "Shit." You said aloud. He catches you off guard as he wraps his arms around you. A bellowing laugh erupts from his mouth, shaking the both of you as he embraced you. "Hopper-" You want to yell at him because you feel that he's making fun of you, but he laugh was so contagious and his arms around you made you feel



so warm that you couldn't help but let a few giggles out yourself. His laugh settles down to just light chuckles as he pulls you away from him a little so you can see his face. "I'm so sorry for laughing, but I'm just- happy." "Happy, that I stormed by blue-balled ass in here and embarrassed myself by saying that I loved you?" He brings his hand up to your face as he grins at you. "Say it again." You smirk at him. "What blue-balled ass?" He leans his head back to let out another laugh. "No, you fucking smart ass!" "Well I'm not saying it now and you're avoiding the question!" He squeezes your arms as he comes back from giggle-city. "Right, right," He coughs to stop his laughter and relaxes his face to become more serious. "That." He lets go of your arms and leans back against the desk. You stand with your arms crossed in front of you, ready to hear his long awaited answer. "Well? Go on, no offense but I think I've been waiting long enough." He nods and clears his throat. "Well you definitely haven't been making it up I have been stopping us for a reason," He shifts on the desk a little as he pauses to come up with the right words to say. "I've told you about my past and you've told me about yours. So at first, yeah, I figured waiting would do us both some good. Seeing as we were cut from the same cloth, way back when. And I don't know about you, but when I had sex with someone, it's because I intentionally wanted to fuck it up. I knew that's not how it would be with you, not at all, but a part of me still felt that if we had sex that I would still somehow fuck everything up between us. So," He adjusted a little to relax his tense shoulders. "I waited just a bit longer. But the more time we spent together, the more I got to know you, the more I really, really, did not want to fuck this up." He reached out for your hand and pulled you closer to him. He placed his hand right under your chin. "The more I fell in love with you," You looked down at him and smiled warmly at his words, reaching up to wipe the few tears that were threatening to fall from your eyes. "The more I wanted our first time together to be special. So I waited, and whether you liked it or not- I didn't want my fuckin' idiot self-sabotaging anything- so anytime we got close, I stopped. Anytime I felt like it was any less than perfect. That time in the car, or that time at the bar, or even that time on your couch. It wasn't what I wanted for you. For us. I'm so sorry if that made you feel like I didn't want you or that there was something wrong with you, I just know me. And I know that I love you. And I know that I fuck things up. And I-" You bring your hand up to his mouth. "Jim, stop." You say as you let out

a breathy laugh. He brings his hand up to press your palm onto his mouth kiss it deeply. You felt your chest get tight. You use your knee to spread his legs apart so you could stand closer to him. You place your hands on his shoulder and look down at him before saying your piece. "Jim, me and you, we're not perfect." He laughs, "I think that's pretty damn obvious, sweetheart." You smack him on the chest. "Shut up and let me sweet talk you." He brings his hands up to wipe the stray tears that had fallen on your cheeks. "Yes, ma'am." He rests his hands on your waist before letting you continue. "But you know what is perfect? Any time I'm with you. Shit, we could be screaming our heads off at each other but I would rather have that, than not have you at all. And even though it makes me so happy, so much that my heart hurts, that you'd want our first time to be special, it's never going to be the perfect moment. Honestly, Hop, as long as I'm with you, it's going to be perfect." You rub your hands over his chest before looking at him directly in his eyes. "I love you. God, I love you so much I feel like I can't breathe. I don't think I've ever-" He stops you by attempting to crash his lips into yours but he comes on too fast and you two clank your front teeth together. You both pull away and laugh before resting your foreheads together. "That's what you get for interrupting me." You whisper lowly at him. "Shut up. Or I won't fuck you." Your breath hitches a little, normally you'd hit him again for teasing you, but you knew he wasn't teasing. "Yes, sir." A growl rumbles in his chest before he carefully, but firmly presses his lips into yours. You move further between his legs. Barely resting your hips against his, and wrap your arms around his neck. Until he was inside of you, you wanted to be as close to him as possible. He let his hands snake down past your hips and he squeezes down hard on your ass. Your lips part from his to let out a moan as you bit down on your bottom lip to try and muffle it. "Baby, I've been wanting this as much as you have," He says before pressing his lips onto your neck. "I want to hear you." You let out a whine as you breathe out. "Golden rule, baby." You purr into his ear. He drops his head on your shoulder and groans as you grind your hips onto his hardening cock that was covered by his tight work pants. He continues his work of peppering your neck with open-mouthed kisses, sucking lightly and making sure to leave faint red marks. You squeeze his shoulder. "You better not give me hickies, Hop." He smirks against your skin before he sucks down harder at the spot he was working on, despite your warning, making you buck your hips into his forcing a laugh into a

groan to fall from his mouth. "Hop-" You say in a stern tone. "What was it you said about touching what isn't yours?" Even through the darkness of your lust, your heart still warmed at the fact that he remembers every detail of that night just as you had. "Well just making sure everyone knows that you're not theirs." He stands up from leaning on the desk and pulls you up into another kiss. "You're mine." He whispers against your mouth before plunging his tongue in between your lips. "Jesus, Hop-" You say through a drawn out moan into his mouth. He moves his hands to hook his thumbs under the bottom of your shirt, slightly lifting it up to rub the bare skin underneath. You hum against his mouth that was working adeptly against yours. You began working on the buttons on his shirt. As your eager fingers start fumbling and failing, you huff in frustration. You pull your mouth away from his. "Fuck, Hop, you take this shirt off more than anyone- do you mind?" He laughs and you lift your shirt over your head and toss it on the floor, not wanting to waste anymore time. You move your shaky hands towards his belt as he begins to unbutton the rest of his shirt. "Someone's eager." He teases at you. "Shut up." You yank his belt from the loops and toss it aside. The buckle hits the floor with a clank. You undo the button on his pants, but slow down dramatically when it comes to the zipper. He groans at your new pace. "Now, now, no need to be mean, sweetheart." He whines at you before taking his shirt off along with his undershirt. "Who's eager now?" You tease back at him before looking across his large chest, running your fingers through his chest hair. God, he was just so- big. Every part of him. His broad shoulders, his wide chest, his skilled hands, you can only imagine how big his dick could be. But you wouldn't have to imagine for much longer. He grabs your hips and spins you around so that your ass is now on his desk. You let out a small yelp in surprise before he crashes his lips back onto yours. He drags his tongue over your bottom lip to ease his way back inside your mouth. A high-pitched whine spills into his mouth, letting him know you were desperate for him to get inside of you sooner. He obeys the noises you were making and moves his hands over to the buttons on your jeans. He quickly undoes them before breaking the kiss in order to pull them all the way off of your body. He wraps his hands around your ankles and drags them up your legs as he slowly eases his face back up to yours, drinking in every inch of your body. He rests his hands near the waistband of your panties. You bite down on your bottom lip, loving the way he

was looking at you. He takes his thumb and grazes it over your covered clit. You whine at his teasing. You weren't in the mood to play games anymore. "Hopper." You say in a low tone. He smirks before pressing his lips back onto yours as he moves the thin fabric that covers your throbbing, wet, mound over to the side. He pushes the tip of his finger hard onto your swollen bud. You wince onto his lips as he starts to move his finger back and forth over your tender bundle of nerves. You move your mouth from his to let out a loud and lengthy moan and he hums in approval. You reach down into his undone pants and palm his covered erection. His head falls onto your shoulder and grunts into your neck. He grabs your wrist. "Baby, you're not the only one who's been wanting this. You keep that up and I'll come in a heartbeat." You gently squeeze his now fully erect cock. He winces at your touch. "Then what the fuck are we doing? I need your cock inside of me now, Jim" His cock twitches and he lets out a moan as he exhales. "That too, baby- you've got to watch your mouth. At least this time around." You smile into his shoulder, loving the effect you have on him right now. A part of you wanted to say one more thing and one more tug to send him over the edge. But you weren't just teasing when you said you needed his cock inside of you. Now. "Are you ready?" You ask him quietly. He tenses up but quickly nods against your chest. You move your hand away and watch as he unsheathes himself from the confines of his underwear. You can't help but gasp slightly at his size. He certainly was not 2 inches, not even close. You shove your underwear off of your legs and let it fall to the floor before helping to guide his hand to sit directly in front of your entrance. His eyes gaze up at yours to make sure that you're ready too. You whine, growing more eager as you bite your lip and nod. You both look down to watch as he pushes himself into you agonizingly slow. You could never get tired of watching your wet pussy swallowing his perfect cock. The further he buried himself inside of you the harder you clenched your eyes shut and the wider the both of your mouths fell open. Once he was completely sheathed inside of you, he paused as your walls adjusted around him. As they relaxed you couldn't help but moan at how badly you wanted him to move, how badly you just wanted him to force you onto your back and hit every spot inside of you until there was nothing left. "Hop, move" Was the only thing you could muster out. He lets out a breathy moan before he nods. He starts to pull out of you gently. He groans before snapping his hips to push himself all the way back

inside of you. He already had you seeing stars. Your mouth falls all the way back open again. "Jim-" You say into a loud moan. He grunts before pulling almost all of the way out. "Jim- Hop- Don't stop" You say in between breaths. You prepare to snap your hips to meet his before he freezes. "Don't move, I-I'm-" He lets out a breathy moan before slowly pushing all the way back into you. His body tenses up as he wraps around you. You realize that he is already so close to finishing. Normally you'd be disappointed that you both couldn't finish but something about making him come after he made you wait so long felt like the ultimate power move. "It's okay, please Jim- I want to feel you come inside me, please Jim, pleasepleaseplease." You almost scream at him to try and send him over. You wrap your legs around him to deepen his thrusts. He pulls his hips back and then snaps them to meet yours once more. He yells your name out over and over as his body starts to rhythmically convulse. You run your hands up and down his back and he lazily pumps through you to ride out the last of his orgasm. You let your legs fall to rest the back of your thighs against the desk as his body relaxed. "I'm so sorry." He whispers into your neck before kissing it softly. You let out a quiet laugh. "It's okay Hop, and there's always next time. But I will say that this totally, 100%, your fault. If only you weren't such a gentleman then maybe you could've fucked me sooner and then maybe you would've lasted longer than three minutes." He laughs against you, his arms still wrapped tight around you. "Ouch. That was a low blow, even for you." He bites down on your shoulder and you try to pull away from him but he only holds you tighter. "Jim- OW, stop! No more marks!" You yell at him. "Then say it." He says through gritted teeth. "OW- okay! I'm yours! Dammit, now let go, you fucking leech!" He releases your flesh from between his teeth and soothes the area with his lips. You hadn't even noticed that he had pulled out of you already since you were too focused on his teeth sinking into your shoulder. You put your hand on his chest and push him back to look at you. "I'm yours." You whisper to him. "And I'm yours" He says to you before kissing you one more time. "Now if only I could have someone had better stamina than a 15 year old." You say against his lips and he groans. "You're never going to let me live that one down are you?" "Probably not." He shakes his head and kisses you one more time before you two start to get dressed.

On your horny-monster-rampage through the office, you hadn't

noticed that you left your key turned in the ignition so your car had died. So there you and Hop were once again, in his truck on your way to your apartment. It made you sad to have to leave him after the night you just had. But you both had work early tomorrow so you figured it was best to just get you home and meet up again tomorrow night. You were snuggled up against Hopper and he had one arm wrapped around you as he drove. He pulled into the parking lot of the bowling alley and you both just sat there in silence, not wanting this night to end. "Can I ask you something?" Hopper quietly asks you. "Anything, dear." You replied to him in a dramatic, sweetened tone. He laughed and you turned your head up to face him. "Do you think it's too soon to ask if you'd consider moving in with me?" You sit up and smiled at him. "Yes, I think it is far too soon." His smile fell, as he was expecting you to take his question seriously. "Y/N, I'm being serious." "I am, too! What kind of girl do you take me for? Some sort of floosy who moves in with her boyfriend of only 5 months? How scandalous! My poor nerves!" You bring the back of your hand to your head before pretending to faint. You rest the back your head on Hopper's thigh, resting your shoulders on the rest of his lap. You flutter your eyes shut to finish off your performance. "Are you done?" He asks you. You laugh and open your eyes to look back up at him. He rolls his eyes at you before meeting your gaze again. "If you don't think it's a good idea than you should just say so! No need to stab at my heart like that." He pouts and brings a hand to lie over his heart, acting more hurt than he actually was. "Well, I was actually wondering if you'd answer a question of mine before you get all butthurt, Jimmy." He raises up an eyebrow at you. "First of all, never call me Jimmy again. Secondly, I'm all ears, preparing to be butthurt." "Well I was hoping you'd let me crash on your couch for a little while- my lease here is almost over and I'm not really feeling this place anymore. So I need to look around for a new place to live, think that would be alright with you?" He leans his head back and groans. "Jesus, you are so infuriating" You sit up and turn to him with your hands up. "Hey if you don't want me to, that's fine, but just say so! No need for name calling!" You put your hand over your heart like he had done as you repeat his words back to him. "You little fuckin' smartmouth" He says under his breath before pulling you in to kiss you deeply. You laugh against his mouth before he pulls away slightly, keeping your faces close. "What so you think that just because you can make your poor boyfriend come just by sayin'

'please' that he'd let you crash on his couch? How do I know you can uphold boundaries? I am spoken for, you know." You loved that you could tease him so much and he could give it right back to you. "Oh trust me, this would be strictly a roommate relationship. A strict roommate relationship between roommates who sometime sleep in the same bed. Roommates who are dating and love each other. Roommates who sometimes fuck." He throws his head back to laugh loudly and you join him. You wonder if the laugh you had around Hopper sounded different. Because it certainly felt different. Something about breathing in this atmosphere pumped full of comfort and love just made your laugh feel that much more genuine. You wonder if you had never met Jim, would your laugh have ever been truly genuine? Not saying he was this missing piece to complete you, but you know that you would certainly be missing out on a lot if Jim Hopper hadn't walked into your life. He wipes the tears that started to fall from the corners of his eyes. "Only sometimes?" "Yes, only sometimes. I only want to respect the roommate boundaries." He kisses you again and grabs your waist to pull you closer. You can't help but smile against his lips and breathe in hard, wanting to remember every part of this moment- even how it smelled. You pulled away and groaned as you rested your forehead on his. "I have to go, or I'm never going to. We'll grow old in this ugly truck. And car sex is only fun the first couple of times, then it just gets uncomfortable." You share a laugh before you turn away to get out of his car. But he pulls you back around for one more kiss before pushing you away from him. You ease your way out of the car, not even saying goodbye. That would mean that it was really over. He rolls his window down and whistles at you. You jog over, step up on truck's step bar, grab onto the bottom of the car window and give him a peck on the cheek. "Love you." He breathes out of his nose and smiles down at you. "I love you. Now go so I can stare at your ass." You punch him on the arm before letting go and stepping down and head towards the bowling alley door. Why did the night have to be over? You thought as you stopped walking. You smiled and turned around to jump back onto the step bar and grabbing onto Jim's shirt collar to stable yourself as your brought him into a deep kiss. You pull away to hover over his mouth before whispering "Can this be one of those 'sometimes'?" He opens his eyes and glances down at your lips before looking back up to your eyes. Without even looking away or responding, you hear him unbuckle his seatbelt, giving you

the cue to step away from the door because he was about to get out. You grab his hand and lead him up to your apartment door. You dig your keys out of your pocket to try and unlock the door but you can't really focus with Jim's mouth attacking your neck. You finally unlock the door but Jim turns you around to attack your mouth instead before you could open it. He pushes you up against the door and your hips come together again. He moves back down to your neck and you take this opportunity to reach for the doorknob. But as soon as you turn it, the door swings open and you two fall onto the floor. "I really think you might actually be trying to kill me." You say to him as you rub the back of your head. "Not yet, I'm not." He growls at you before leaning down to bring you back into the kiss, kicking the door shut with his foot. You were glad you got a chance to fuck up your apartment before your lease ended. No pun intended.



## 7. Chapter 7

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

**\*HOPPER POV\*** When you first met from Ch.1 and the bar scene from Ch. 3 + 4

It had been a hell of a long day over at the ol' HPD so you decide to rest your eyes, only for just a minute, tipping your hat over your eyes and kicking your feet up on your desk. But it seems there really is no rest for the wicked since you're ripped from your catnap to the sound of the true wicked one in the office screeching at you from outside your office door. "JAMES HOPPER, EARTH TO JAMES HOPPER, DID YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID?" You loudly snort, interrupting your snoring, and wipe the drool from your mouth as you adjust to sit upright in your chair. "God dammit, Flo! Come in for Christ's sake!" You yell back at her. She opens the door but stands in the doorway with her hands on her hips. "What is it, Flo?" You ask her, picking your hat off from the floor and dusting it off, it must've fallen off when you fell asleep. But Jesus, you don't even remember falling asleep- you can't even remember the last time you got a decent night's sleep. You feel that even if you slept for two days you still

wouldn't feel rested. But you might as well have slept through 2 days of work right there in your office from the way Flo was glaring at you. "Well if you would've been awake to hear me the first three times I told you, you'd know that there was a bit of a fender bender that needs your attention." You raise an eyebrow at her. "A fender bender? Why the hell do you need me to handle a fender bender? Just send Callahan to deal with it!" Flo shakes her head. "Because the victim is the lovely Mr. Harry the we love oh so dearly. Last time we sent Callahan to handle whatever was ailing ol' Harold he came back sniffing and puffy, so I'm sorry you'll have to do your job for once." She scoffs at you and the walks back to her desk. You lean your head back and let out a long groan before getting up and heading towards the blazer.

You park the blazer off to the side of the two cars. You see Harry, and even in the low light of the evening you can see that he's red as a fucking stop sign. He stood next to his car with his arms crossed in front of him; his chest rising and falling like he'd just ran a marathon. You thought that you had a short temper but Harry made you look like mother fucking Teresa. You look over to the woman leaning against her car but you can't see her face except for what was illuminated by the burning cherry of her cigarette. You get out of the Blazer and head over to meet them. You try and get a better look at the woman's face as she takes in another drag from but she quickly extinguishes on her foot. You open your mouth to ask what had happened here but once you were close enough to finally get a good look at the most beautiful, softest, and no doubt the most gorgeous face you've ever seen, your lips came right back together. She shakes her head and tries to say something before Harry cuts her off. You turned your body to face him and crossed your arms while you let him have his tantrum.

Jesus, Where did she even come from? And what the hell is she doing here? As unlikely as it might be, I hope to God she's on her way to Hawkins. But a pretty girl like that is probably just passing through to greater things and greener pastures, none of which she'll find in Hawkins. But maybe she's thirsty, God knows my mouth is fucking dry, how could it not be- fucking look at her.

Harry starts to move towards the woman, pointing his finger at her.

You took a firm step between them. You knew Harry didn't have the balls to put a hand on anyone let alone a woman, but that fucking pointed finger pissed you off so much that your feet just kind of carried you there. "Now, now, Harry, I know you're upset but there's nothin' I can do for you if you decide to put a hand on this young lady, so let's not do nothin' rash and calm down-" Turns out Harry grew some balls tonight and pushes his finger right onto your chest. What a fucking idiot. "Do NOT tell me to CALM down, Jim. I have a right-" You've had enough and now you have reason enough to bring him in for assaulting a police officer so you swing your cuffs onto his outstretched wrist and pull it to meet the other behind his back. "Now you did it Harry, you see if you woulda just calmed down I could've helped you out here but now the only right you got is the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will," Now you definitely could've helped Harry out but there's no fucking way you actually would have. Before you get too far away from the woman you hear a muffled laugh come from her direction. You couldn't help but smile as you recited the rest of the Miranda Rights to Harry. You strapped Harry into the backseat. "Hope your comfy, Harry. Stay put until I get back, alright?" You smirk at him before slamming the door and heading back towards the woman. She was holding her hand over her mouth to fail at trying to muffle her laughs. You glance over at the cars to check the damage in a weak attempt to keep yourself from laughing with her. You're supposed to be a professional, God dammit. Not that there was any damage to look over, not a surprise Harry getting worked up over nothing. Like you were one to talk though, this woman has you wound up over her laugh alone. "Well, it seems you got lucky runnin' into the dumbest most ill-tempered man in town miss-" You're the lucky one more like it. Maybe Flo really was a witch and has her own crystal ball to watch 'my pretty' like the wicked witch of the west. She brings her hand down from her mouth to shake yours. Is this really as close as I'm going to get to her lips? GOD DAMMIT, JIM- PROFESSIONAL. "Y/LN, my name's Y/N Y/LN." "Glad to meet you, Miss Y/LN. The name's Chief Hopper." You tip your hat at her like a fucking idiot. What. The. Hell. Was. That. Did you actually just tip your fucking hat? She let's out a small laugh. God dammit. "Please, call me Y/N." Okay, maybe you haven't fucked this up completely. She starts rubbing up and down her biceps, it took everything you had to not take your jacket off to put around her. "I'd say call me Jim, but you probably shouldn't when I'm on

duty.” Way to grab at straws, dipshit. Let the poor woman go! “What about when you’re off duty?” Wait, what? Wait. What? She’s smirking, I think. You didn’t fuck this up! At least, not yet. You flash a small smirk back in her direction before you remembered you were trying to be a god damn professional. You look down and let out a sharp cough. “Well, I uh- I should be getting ol’ Harry here to the station to cool off for the night.” You could feel your cheeks getting hot and you were not about to embarrass yourself in front of this beautiful woman any more than you already had so you turn away from her to gesture towards your truck. “You’re not going to give me a ticket?” You hear her ask from behind you. You can’t help but laugh. You’d think she would’ve caught on to that by now. You don’t know many cops who would stick around this long just to chat. I mean you did just arrest the guy who called the cops on her. You crouch down to get a better look at the very minor damage on the front of her car. “It seems you got the worst of it, and you had to deal with Mr. hot pants over there so I think you’ve been punished enough for one night.” You hear a quiet laugh come from her as you stand back up to face her. One more laugh like that and you’ll be a puddle on the floor. You both sit in silence for a minute; maybe it was hours you couldn’t really tell. Either way, it was getting unbearably awkward. You try and let out a shaky laugh to break the silence but it only made it worse. Maybe you should just turn and run? “Okay, well thanks I uh- should probably be going. My um- sister is probably wondering uh- where I- am.” You’d think her speaking up would clear the air, but her speech is chopped up from her attempt to get into her car without breaking eye contact with you. You couldn’t help but wince a little every time she tugged on her locked seatbelt. You try and give her a proper goodbye but she’s already started to pull away. “Bye Ji- Chief. Bye Chief Hopper!” She yells at you as she pulls off of the shoulder. You let out a playful groan and close your eyes at her final awkward action. Definitely not the usual effect you have on women. And not the usual effect women have on you. But it’s not unwelcome in the slightest. You wipe your hands down your face as you replay that scene in your head over and over; cringing at every stupid thing you said and did. “Jesus, Jim...” You say under your breath before turning to walk towards your blazer to get back to the station.

It had been a long fucking day. But when was it not? You’d say you

missed the days when you could say, "it's been a long day" after rubbing on your sore muscles gotten from chasing around crooks and breaking down doors, but you can't recall any days like that since you started working in Hawkins. If you had to listen to one more PTA mom call and complain about the fucking type of 'abrasive' concrete used on the basketball courts in the park, you might just lose your damn mind. You rub your eyes and look up at the clock on the wall of your office. 5:42 pm. Good enough. You get up from your seat and stride over to grab your coat from the rack by the door. You shut off the lights and lock up your office before heading towards the front door of the precinct. "Where do you think you're going?" You hear Flo screech at you. "Out." You push the door open before she could yell at you anymore and head towards your truck. You needed a drink. You head down the road towards the small bar you know oh so well. You head inside and the bartender gets started on your usual and had it ready before you got to the bar. "Thanks, Boss" You said to the bartender as you lift your whiskey up to your lips. He nods back at you before checking on the one other patron at the other end of the bar. You scan the rest of the nearly empty bar before you see a familiar head buried into their hands at a booth alone. You couldn't help but smile because you felt like your wish had actually been answered for once. She was still here. You head over to her booth to check on her, she looks like she's had a shitter day than you've had. She barely shifts her eyes from out of her hands to look up at you. "Is everything alright over here?" "Oh yeah, over here? Everything is going real swell. What about you, Chief?" She gives you a weak smile before downing the rest of her double in one go. She's had a much shittier day than you've had. You raise your eyebrows up a little, trying not to judge her too much. You didn't judge her at all. But seeing her like this made your chest go tight and a bad taste fill your mouth. Seeing her hurt just made you hurt. So you thought you'd do what you'd do best, embarrass the shit out of yourself. Maybe you'd get a smile out of her yet. You move over to sit across from her. "Well, if you must know, my day has been incredible. Really, it's riveting story if you'd like to hear about it." You tried to lay the sarcasm on as thick as possible, not knowing if she would be too drunk to pick up on it. "The great Chief Hopper wants to grace me with his tales of bravery in his life on the force? God, I couldn't be more interested!" Dick. But you were grateful to know she wasn't too far-gone. She smiled at you that warmed your heart and loosened up

your tight chest. "First of all, I told you to call me Jim when I'm off duty, and second, you better get ready for this one, it sure is a doozy."

You told her the longest, most bullshit, and most boring story you could and she listened to every word. She took a deep breath and stretched. You had to look away as your eyes couldn't help but trail up her torso, focusing intently on the strip of exposed skin that her lifting her arms had revealed. God, she was pretty. You could only wonder what her waist would feel like gripped in your hands. Your thoughts are interrupted by a long sigh that fell from her lips. You looked back on her face and that tightness came rushing back as your eyes now focused on her intense frown. Shit. Time to up the ante. She lays her hands palms down on the middle of the table. You place your hands gently on top of hers. You wish you could blame the whiskey for your forwardness, but there was a little twinge in the pit of your stomach that flared when you touched her skin that told you it certainly wasn't the whiskey. "Okay, for real this time. Is everything alright?" You looked her directly in the eye, giving her a warm sympathetic look. Even though you didn't want to pry, you so badly wanted her to let you help her carry the baggage she was struggling to carry. You'd do just about anything at this point to see her smile again. "I'm just having a tough time adjusting, is all, nothing I can't handle. No need to worry." She smiles like she did before you sat down at her booth. That's not the smile you were hoping for. You looked down at her hands and couldn't help clenching your jaw. You were afraid Hawkins had already sunk its claws into her and knew exactly how it felt to be stuck in a small town that sucks the life out of you. You desperately didn't want that for her. "If you don't want to tell me what's really going on, you don't have to, I don't want to pry. But is there anything you think I could do to help?" You didn't want to be her solid rock or anything, looking the way she looks she probably already has a guy filling that position. But right now there's no one here with her at this bar and there was just something about her. "Actually, I'm really desperate for a job. Know anyone hiring a law school drop out with half a degree?" You let go of her hands to slip the napkin from under her drink. "Have you got a pen?" "Not on me, but I might have one in my car. Walk me out?" You both get out of your seats but even though your buzz had faded, she was still very much drunk. She nearly trips

but you instinctually grab her biceps. Your fingers grip her tighter than needed but touching her again made you realize how much you missed how she felt from when you had your hands on hers. You almost wanted to pull her against your chest, wanting to feel more of her. But moving her too fast would probably end with her vomit all over you. "You good?" You laugh trying not to make fun of her. You'd been exactly where she is and you probably would've been there tonight if you hadn't spotted her earlier. "Thanks, yeah. Just-lost my footing for a second." Even though your thoughts were way past the line of friendly, you gave her a friendly pat before letting her go. You stretched out your hand by your side, your body reacting to not having that contact again. You head towards her car together and you lean against the front of it while she rummages her car for a pen. "Aha! Found one, hopefully it works!" She stumbles again except this time it doesn't make you laugh. The cop in you couldn't let her get behind the wheel. You feel that since you've already crossed a line so you figured it wouldn't hurt to cross it a bit further. "Now I can only give you this information on one condition, I need just one more thing from you." You grab her wrist and bring her closer to you. You slowly extend your neck down to her face. This was dangerous. You weren't sure you had the self-control not to kiss her but you weren't sure you wouldn't get slapped if you did. You hover your mouth just above hers before diverting to the side of her face, snatching her keys from her hand in the process. "I need you to give me your keys." Her eyes widen and her jaw drops. You let her wrist go as you lean your head back to laugh at her. She slaps your chest and moves to lean against her driver's door. You hope she couldn't tell how much warmer you'd become, as you had gotten closer to her. You begin to write the number and address of a firm you knew of that might hire her. You knew there were other firms in town but this was the one the station worked with the most. Even though it seemed like a selfless act, you couldn't say that with a clear conscious. "God damn tease." You hear her say quietly under her breath. Dear, God. There was no stopping the smirk that was on your face. You take this as a sign to step a little even from that line some more. You flip the napkin over and write your home and office number on the back quickly before you could pussy out. "This is a small firm in town that the station works with a lot, they always seem to be looking for temps so maybe they'd take a pretty college drop out with half a law degree. Honestly, you'd probably be the most promising thing they've

seen in months. Maybe years, even.” Before you knew it she had her body up against yours with her hands around your neck. You tensed up at first before letting your instincts take over. You wanted to revel in how she felt like it was the last time because it very well might be. Well, just enough to not scare her away. “Oh my god, thank you so much, this really does help a lot. Thank you” she pulls away but with your instincts still at the reins your hands linger on her waist. You didn’t want to stop touching her. You notice that she still has her hands on your shoulders. You finally get a hold on your instincts and move your hands from her and she does the same to you. She clears her throat before speaking again. “So since you have my keys, how am I supposed to get home then?” You had almost forgotten that you took them. Everything right now was a blur, being that close to her and then pushing away took a little out of you. “Well obviously I’m not going to let your drive home drunk so I figured I’d just give you a ride. I can swing by your place in the morning and show you where the office is before bringing you back to your car. I mean- only if you wanted!” You rub the back of your neck trying to ease the tension the loud volume of your voice had created. You wondered if she was as nervous as you were. “That would actually be really nice, thanks. You’re too good to me, Hop.” She pats you on the shoulder before heading towards the blazer. You were glad she walked in front of you because you couldn’t keep the smile from growing on your lips.

The drive was pretty quiet other than her giving you directions to your sister’s house and you pointing out a couple things here and there. It was mostly just so you could remember what you were passing so you could make it to her house tomorrow morning. You pull up to the front of the house and put the truck in park. “Thanks for the ride, Jim. Well, really, thanks for everything. This night would have gone a whole lot different if you hadn’t bothered me at my booth.” You both turned to look at each other. “It’s no trouble, really. I mean Hawkins hasn’t given you the warmest welcome, so I figured I’d try and make it a little better. At least try to do what I can.” What a liar. I mean I guess not completely, but anyone could easily call you on your bullshit if they heard that. She turns away from you and you hope to god that she isn’t about to get out the car. “Well, if you need anything else, my home number and the number to the station are on the back of that napkin there, feel free to call me anytime.” You say to get her to stay for just a second longer. But eventually she does get out of your truck. You watched her as she headed to the front door.



She turned and waved at you and you did the same.

Shit I'm in deep, aren't I?

You thought as you let out a long sigh, dragging your hand over your smiling face.

## 8. Chapter 8 & Epilogue

### Summary for the Chapter:

Hop cares. Sometimes he cares so much it hurts. After simply slipping on the icy steps of the cabin you both shared, you'd think a pat with a damp rag and at the very worst; a Band-Aid would have you right as rain. But as Jim's worries get the best of him, he treats as if you had broken your neck. At first you think he's trying to tease you, and then you find it sweet. But the longer his thick brow stayed furrowed, the more you found his intense yet tender act concerning. As you look fondly back at the history of your relationship with the chief, you wonder if he's always seen you as some fragile piece of porcelain. Or maybe something else was going on? You hope your nasty anxious tendencies hadn't rubbed off on him just as they started to take over your own thoughts in this situation.

"Hopper stop, slow down! I literally JUST slipped on those steps!" You try and warn him before he makes it to the stairs but it doesn't stop him from stomping down the steps to crouch beside you. "I'm fi-" He interrupts you by scooping you up in his arms. You let out a small yelp in surprise. You can't help but let out light giggles as he carries you like a baby against his chest over to the couch. What an ass. Making such a big fuss, it's not like you were crying over this or anything. But I guess you were the same in never letting the opportunity to tease just slip away. "Why thank you, my strong prince, what ever would I do without you?" You tease at him as he gently sets you down on the couch. His stern expression doesn't waver however and he gets on his knees in front of you. He puts one hand under your thigh and another under your knee to lift your leg closer to his face. "God, Y/N, you need to be more careful!" He says to you firmly. He's playing hard to get, it'll take more than that to get him to break. "I know, I know, but I just love having you take care of me- its kind of a turn-on." You smirk at him as he carefully puts your foot back on the ground. But still his frown never rises. You'd thought

that one would work for sure. He huffs as he gets up and practically stomps down the hallway and into the bathroom. You take the chance to a look at the damage done on your knee and it's really nothing more than a scrape. The only pain you feel is over the loss of your favorite pair of stockings. Even though Jim says he likes stockings on you so much, he sure has a habit of ripping them. The now tattered and torn hose that barely covered your legs had lasted longer than every other pair you've ever owned. You kick your shoes off and shed your coat before Jim heads back into the living room, dumping the entire contents of your bathroom cabinet on the floor next to your feet. "Jesus, did you rob an ambulance?" You ask him but he ignores you and starts pouring rubbing alcohol onto a cloth. It wasn't really like Jim to not bicker back at you but you simply just blamed his mood on how late it was and you did wake him rather abruptly. So you just kept it up, usually when he's get like this that's all it really took to get him smiling again. He very gently places the cloth over your 'wound' and you cry out as loud as you could and violently pull your leg away from his touch. You lay back on the arm of the couch as toss and turn, wincing in make-believe pain. He immediately gets up to hover over you and grabs your wrists. "Oh my god, I am so sorry baby, I should've been more careful!" You stop your fidgeting and start laughing loudly at his reaction. He groans and lets go of your wrists to plop down on the cushion next to you. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry- that wasn't funny. Please medic, continue your work." You say between heavy breaths and laughs. You sit up to face him, expecting him to be laughing with you but all you saw was Jim leaning his head back, his brow furrowed, his eyes shut, and his tense fingers rubbing the bridge of his nose. "Jim, I was just teasing." You tuck your legs under you and reach out to lay your hand on his shoulder. But before you could touch him he lets out a sharp breath through his nose and sits up to rest his elbows on his knees. "Yeah, I got it-all you fucking do is tease. Would it kill you to take something seriously for once? God, Y/N." He shouts at you before sighing and falling back into the couch. His volume made you jump and his words stung. Maybe he wasn't teasing after all. "What the hell has gotten into you, Hopper? Yeah I tease, but so do you! Why are you freaking the fuck out, I only scraped my knee for Christ's sake?" You were angry and wanted to keep yelling at him but you catch him pinch the tip of his reddened nose, making you realize how damp his lashes were. Has he been crying? He squints his eyes and looks down,

not responding to you. He really was shaken up over this. But it can't only be this, there has to be something else bothering him. And with Hopper being Hopper, he wasn't going to give anything up without a fight. You lean closer to him and place one hand on his shoulder. You take your other hand and press your thumb in between his brows and rub gently to try and force him to relax. He lets out a long sigh before grabbing your wrist and holding it to his chest. You could feel how hard his heart was beating. "Jim please look at me, tell me what's really bothering you." You ask him quietly as you squeeze his shoulder. He opens his eyes and turns his head to look at you. You give him a soft smile and he brings his hand up and gently places it on your cheek. You turn your face over to kiss his palm. "Hop, you know you can tell me anything. I'm right here." He groans and his head drops on your chest. "I'm sorry for yelling. I just-" He pauses for a moment and you run your fingers through his hair before kissing the top of his head. "It's okay, I'm sorry for yelling too. Tell you what, if you tell me what's wrong, I'll let you keep playing doctor." He lets out a breathy chuckle into your chest before he sits up but keeps close to you, resting his hands on top of your thighs. He keeps his head down and lets out a shaky sigh before finally speaking up. "I just- I worry about you, alright? And this time was just a skinned knee but what if next time it's worse?" His grip on your thighs tightens. "And what if I'm not there to help you? Or what if I am there and there's nothing I can do to help you? I know you can handle yourself but I just can't stop thinking about losing you and it hurts so much I can't even stand it." You put your hand on his cheek to guide his head up to face yours again. "Jim, I'm not dying." You say through a slight laugh. "I know you're not dying. That's not the kind of 'losing' I'm talking about." His breath hitches and before he could cry he shoves himself off of the couch to stand in front of you. "I just feel- I just feel so goddamn helpless! Baby, I love you. I love you with every piece of me. This has been the best year of my miserable life, being with you. But I'm a fucking mess. I have nothing good to offer you. I have no idea what's been stopping you from getting up and walking out of here." Tears were now streaming down both of your faces. You wanted to scream at him to stop but his words made you hurt so much you couldn't think of what to say. "It would absolutely kill me if you left, but there would be nothing I could do to keep you here! God dammit, I'm so fucking terrified that when I wake up I'll be alone and realize that I'd finally wrung you

dry. I've never had anyone stick around as long as you have and it's gotta be a matter of time before-" "JESUS, ENOUGH." You scream at him. You don't know what came over you but you couldn't listen to him talk about himself like that anymore. You aggressively wipe the tears from your face and stand up in front of him. "God dammit, Jim! What the hell are you even talking about? Do you actually think I just hang around here and tell you that I love you just for a good lay or something? Well I don't. I've hung around for so long because I've never had someone like you in my life before Jim Hopper!" You slap his chest in frustration, like your trying to pound the words into him. "What do you mean you have nothing to offer me? Jim, you are everything to me! Do you hear me? Everything! God, it pisses me off that you would think that. YOU piss me off!" You hit him again. "You think I don't get scared every time you walk out that door? Do you know what it would do to me if I never got to see your STUPID face ever again? Jesus, Jim!" You try to hit him again but he catches your arm. "Stop fucking hitting me." You look up at him and see his dopey smile stretched on his tear soaked cheeks. You both start laughing at how ridiculous you both have sounded in the last couple of minutes. He pulls you into his chest and squeezes you tight. "So what are you saying I'm not a good lay?" You laugh against him before pulling away enough to look up at him. "There's the James Hopper I know and love." You step up on your toes to kiss him but he blocks your mouth with his hand. "Nope, I'm sterile. You'll have to wait until after your operation." You let out a playful whine before heading back over to the couch to let Hopper finish patching you up. He sits on his knees in front of you like he did before and carefully pulls off what's left of your stockings. You watch him as he tends to your leg. "Did you really think I was just going to leave?" You ask him quietly. He pauses for a moment before looking at you. "No, I just- I guess it's hard for me to think you'd want to stick around with a dickhead like me for so long. I figured it would only be a matter of time before I fucked everything up or you got bored. I don't know." He shrugs his shoulders and picks up some gauze. "Boring is definitely not something I'd use to describe you, Jimmy." He keeps his head down and smiles as he slowly wraps a bandage around your leg. "And if anything, I'd be the one to fuck everything up. But I promise you," You lean forward and lift his head up to press a kiss on his lips. "I'm not going anywhere. You're stuck with my annoying ass until one of us croaks. But by the sound your knees made when you crouched

down, that probably won't be for very much longer." He growls and wraps his arms around you to pick you up and throw you on the couch. You squeal and laugh as he pinches at your sides. You try and shove him off of you but your arms and legs are trapped under him, leaving you helpless to his ruthless tickling. "Do you surrender?" "I SURRENDER, I SURRENDER!" You scream at him. He stops but doesn't get up to release your arms and legs. "Are you going to stop being a little shit?" "Never." He smirks at you. "Good." He leans down to crash his lips into yours before shifting his body to let your arms and legs free. You immediately wrap your hands behind his neck to deepen the kiss further. He lets out a slight moan against your lips before dragging his tongue across your bottom lip, wordlessly asking for permission to slide into your mouth. You part your lips to give him access and moan as his tongue comes into contact with yours. You can feel him start to harden between your legs, making your hips buck slightly. He winces a little at the contact. You put your hands on his shoulders and push his face away from yours. But he only moves his mouth to the sensitive skin on your neck. "Jim-" He hums against you. "Jim, as much as I'd love to keep this going, I think in my condition it would be better if we moved this to the bedroom, don't you think?" He groans against your neck before pulling away from you. "Ugh, fine." You both get up from the couch but before Jim can get too far away from you reach behind his neck to pull the collar of his shirt over his head and toss it on the floor. He reaches to try and start unbuttoning your shirt but you slip away from his grasp and he chases you down the hallway. He catches you right in front of the door of your bedroom and grabs your waist to pull you back to him. His lips attach themselves back onto your neck as she slowly unzips your skirt. He pulls away as he drags the garment over your hips. You wiggle the rest of your way out of it and kick it away from you. Hopper's hand comes down on your ass with a firm smack. "Liar." He growls in your ear. "You said you were wearing black." He bites down on your ear lobe and your eyes flutter shut. "Honestly, Hopper does it really matter what kind of underwear I've got on, it never stays on for long anyways." He flips you around so your back is touching the frame of the doorway and he presses up against you. "You got me there, sweetheart." He smirks down at you before pressing his lips onto yours again. Before it could get any deeper however, you slip out of his grasp and grab his hand to lead him closer to the bed. You push him to sit down with his legs

hanging over the side. He reaches out to pull you closer but you push his hands away. "Patience, patience." You taunt at him as you slowly unbutton your blouse before shedding it away to fall on the floor. His hands grip the edge of the bed and he lets out a sharp sigh. You crouch down on the floor, gripping his thighs to stabilize you and gently place your palm on his growing erection. He winces as you slowly start to increase the pressure. "Now baby," He starts to whine but you shush him before he could say anything else. "Let me show you how much you mean to me." You rise up to press a longing kiss on his cheek before finally planting your knees on the ground. His breath starts to pick up as you hook your thumbs under the band of his sweatpants. You snake them down his legs, letting your nails drag across his skin as you expose it, giving him chills. Once his pants were completely off, you go back to palming him. A groan rumbles in his throat as his arousal grows. You replace your hand with the tip of your tongue, letting it run up and down his clothed shaft. "Oh, shit." He lifts his head with a groan and his hand goes to the back of your head trying to get you to stop teasing. You retract your tongue back into your mouth as you smile at his eagerness. You've barely touched him yet he's fully erect and throbbing for you. The way he just melts under your fingers gets you soaked. You repeat the same process of removing his boxers by letting your nails drag over his skin and waste no more time getting your lips around his head. "Fu-uck" His hips buck at the sudden contact as you had been teasing him for so long. You gently place your hands on his hips to try and keep him still so you could do the work. You barely take him in, mostly focusing on his leaking tip. Your tongue circles around his head and you pull off of him with a pop before taking him in a bit further. "Baby, your mouth feels so fucking good." You look up at him as you drag your lips halfway down his shaft to see his eyes shut tight and his mouth wide open, letting out loud moans between heavy breaths. You take your hands from his hips and use them to pump the rest of his shaft that your weren't working with your mouth. His hand that was gently laced in the hair on the back of your head is now tightly gripping, as he gets closer to the edge. As much as you like making Hopper feel good, you've spent way too much time thinking about fucking him to not actually fuck him right now. You slowly slide your hands and mouth off of him and let your hands travel up his body as you move up to kiss him. You let your mouth trail over his cheek before hovering over his ear. "I could spend the whole night with my

mouth on your cock, but I need you inside of me. I need you.” You bite down and pull at his earlobe as he groans. You place light kisses on his neck while he hooks his thumbs under the band of your panties and starts to pull them down. He uses his knee to bump your legs further apart and he dips a finger inside of you before dragging up your slit. “Already so wet for me, baby. I bet you were dripping like this since the moment I called you. You know what?” He slaps you on the ass again. “That’s what you get for getting me hard at work.” You laughed in his ear. “It’s not like you didn’t ask for it.” You whisper to him. He slaps your ass again. “I know I did, smart ass. Just because your crippled doesn’t mean your shit goes unpunished.” You laugh before pushing at his shoulder to make him lay back on the bed. You climb on top of him and pull him into a kiss. He wraps his arms around you and unhooks your bra, tossing it somewhere in the room. His lips go back on yours and his hands cup at your breasts. You moan against his lips as he rolls your hard nipples between his fingers. You open your mouth to let out a moan and to give his tongue more access. He pinches down hard on your nipples and pulls them towards him before releasing them, letting them bounce back into place. You pull your mouth away from his to lift your head as you become even more aroused. He presses hard, open-mouthed kisses onto your neck before flipping you over onto your back. He places himself between your legs and kisses his way down your neck and between your breasts. He takes one tender nipple into his mouth, biting down gently and swirling his tongue over the tight bud. With every exhale you let out a whimpering moan. He moves his mouth to continue his trail of kisses down your stomach and looping his arms under your thighs, his mouth hovering just above your center. He runs the flat of his tongue from the top of your opening to just above your aching clit. Your body forces out a breathy groan as he starts lapping at your opening, letting his tongue graze just over the sensitive nerves that line it. “God, how do you always taste so fucking good?” He moans into you. His praise nearly sends you over the edge before you grab the sides of his head to try and pull him back up to you. “No- no more. I need your cock inside of me. Right fucking now.” He smirks as he moves to position himself in front of your entrance. “Yes ma’am.” He teases at you. You grab his shaft and circle his head over your clit a few times before easing it into your opening. You both look down to watch as he sinks down inside of you. “Fuuuck Baby, I could cum right now just watching that.” He



says against your mouth before crashing his lips back onto yours. You both waited a moment for your walls to relax but it didn't take long as you weren't sure how much more aroused you could get at this point. Hopper pulls himself about halfway out before slowly pushing back in again. "Are you okay?" He asks you as if this were your first time. "Yeah. Yes, I'm fine. Better than fine." He lets out a sharp laugh before kissing you again, pulling himself out almost all of the way and slowly back in again. "Hopper, you're not going to break me." You say against his mouth. He lets out a small laugh. "I know, but you might just break me." You deepen the kiss and bite down on his lower lip before slipping your tongue inside. As your tongue massaged his, Jim started to pick up his pace, moving his hands to grab hold of your thighs. You wrapped your legs around his waist and hooked your ankles together to deepen his thrusts. He then started to slow down but brought more intensity into each snap of his hips so he could bottom out into you. The slick sounds of your bodies coming together were now muffled under your moans and whimpers that came out through your quick breaths. You release one of your legs and used it to flip Hopper onto his back so you could ride him. You planted your hands onto his chest and rolled your hips as he guided them with his hands. You quickened your pace as you reached the edges of your climax. Hopper sat up and wrapped his hands around your back to scoot himself back to where you were both sitting up and he could push himself further into you. You gripped his shoulders to stable yourself as you continued to roll your hips into his. Hopper moved one hand to grab your hip and the other to push on the bed so he could lift his hips up to meet yours. You and Hopper increased your pace with grunts between each thrust before you finally reached your long awaited orgasm. Your jaw fell all the way open and you let out a loud, drawn out moan and Hopper continued to thrust into you with your walls clenching tight around him. As your body started to shake Hopper flicked his thumb over your clit before rubbing circles over it, all while continuing to thrust up into you. "Hopper- stopstopstop s' too much I-" But before Hopper could pull his fingers away he has you already rolling into a second orgasm. You had heard that it was possible to have orgasms one after the other, but this was the first time it had ever happened to you. And of course Hopper would be the one to do it. Your nails dig into Hopper's shoulders and your eyes start to water as your legs shake around Hopper's waist. "I'm okay, I'm okay, just- keep going." You say

breathily to him. "Did- did you just come- again?" Hopper asks between breaths and thrusts. You whine and quickly nod at him. Hopper pulls you close to him and lays you down on your back before quickening his pace. You snap your hips to meet his and wrap your legs back around him. His thrusts start to waver before his body starts to shake. "Fuckfuckfuck-" He cries before almost roaring out as he comes inside of you. He falls over and buries his face into your neck as he rides out the last of his orgasm. You both still and listen to each other's heavy breathing before he pulls out of you to flop over on his back beside you. You both burst out laughing, rolling around and squirming before turning on your sides to face each other again. "So..." Hopper says to you before grabbing your hip to pull you closer to him. "So?" "Did that count as your two favors?" You lean your head back to laugh at him. "Oh no, you don't get out of it that easy!" "Come on, at least tell me what they are!" He pouts at you. "I'll let you know once I figured it-" You stop. "What?" He asks you. You let out a playful groan and shut your eyes. "Shiiiiit. The cigs. I must've dropped them on the way down. Fuck, they're probably all soaked from the snow. I'm so sorry, Hop." He laughs before pulling your face against his chest. "That's okay, baby. Thanks anyways, I think I'll survive." He kisses the top of your head before pulling you far enough away so that your eyes met. "I love you." He says quietly. "I love you too."

## EPOLOGUE

Two-ish years later.

"Hopper, I swear to god if you make us late to my sister's baby shower, we're both going to be dead. Get your lazy ass up!" You yell out to him from the bathroom trying to rush to brush your teeth. You run back into your bedroom to see Hopper sitting up on the bed rubbing his eyes. You throw off Hopper's shirt you had slept in, leaving you only in your bra and underwear while you looked through your closet to find something to wear. "Hopper seriously, get ready! We have to leave in like-" You turn around and see him kneeled down on the floor. "What are you doing we have to-" "Could you stop worrying about your sister's stupid fucking baby shower and just listen to me for five minutes?" You nod. "Ok so I've been trying

to do this for fucking weeks and I can never find the perfect moment. But then I started to think back to when you said ‘there will never be the perfect moment because it’s always perfect when we’re together and blah blah blah.’ He leans over to open up the drawer of the bedside table and pulls out a blue velvet box. You let a breath in, now realizing what was happening. “I swear to god James, if there’s a stupid pair of earrings in that box I’ll replace them with your fucking testicles.” He laughs before opening up the box. It wasn’t earrings. “Y/N, you annoy the shit out of me. And I know for a fact, I annoy the shit out of you. But I have no idea what my life would’ve been like if you hadn’t crashed into Harry that one night. You have no idea how much you mean to me. So I’m asking if you’d give me the rest of forever to show it to you.” He reaches out for your hand and pulls the ring out of the box to slip it on your ring finger. How he figured out the right size, you’ll never know. “Will you marry me?” You look down into his glistening eyes and can already feel the guilt setting in for what you’re about to do. You pull your hand from his to get a better look at the ring before replying. “No. But I’ll keep the ring.” You grin at him before pushing him over to the ground, giving you a head start to get away from him before he attacks you. You squeal as he scoops you up and throws you on the couch. “Say yes!” He yells at you as he pokes and pinches at your sides, making you scream and laugh even louder. “No!” “GOD DAMMIT, Y/N, SAY IT.” He bellows at you as he squeezes you harder. “FINE, FINE! YES, YES, YES. I’LL MARRY YOU, NOW PLEASE-PLEASE STOP!” He stops tickling you and you two stay quiet as your breaths slow down. “Will you really? No more fucking teasing.” He says sternly at you but while still smiling. “Yes, of course I’ll marry you! Who else is going to put up with my smart mouth?” He pulls you up to kiss you hard. You can’t help but smile against each other’s lips. He pulls away from you to pull you into a tight embrace. “God, I love you. And your smart mouth.” “I love you. So much.” You say, buried into his shoulder. “How late would you say is too late to show up to your sister’s?” He says as he starts kissing your neck. “I mean, I think she’d want us to show up fashionably late, wouldn’t you say, Hop?” You laugh as you latch yourself around him and he gets up to head towards the bedroom, officially starting your forever.